DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 277 758 TM 870 037

TITLE	English Language Arts, Exit Level. TEAMS Instructional Strategies Guide.
INSTITUTION	Texas Education Agency, Austin.
PUB DATE	86
NOTE	123p.; For related documents, see TM 870 022-039.
AVAILABLE FROM	Texas Education Agency, William B. Travis Building, 1701 North Congress Avenue, Austin, TX 78701.
PUB TYPE	Guides - Classroom Use - Guides (For Teachers) (052)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC05 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Basic Skills; *Behavioral Objectives; *English Instruction; *Grade 11; Graduation Requirements; High Schools; Instructional Development; Learning Activities; *Learning Strategies; *Minimum Competency Testing; Reading Instruction; Reading Skills; State Programs; Teaching Guides; Testing Programs; Test Items; Writing Instruction; Writing Skills
IDENTIFIERS	Test Content; *Texas Educational Assessment of Minimum Skills

ABSTRACT

The Texas Educational Assessment of Minimum Skills (TEAMS) was developed by the Texas Educational Agency (TEA), in response to Texas House Bill 72 (1984), which mandated a new basic skills assessment program for mathematics, reading, and writing at grades 1, 3, 5, 7, 9 and 11. The test given to students in Grade 11 is an exit-level examination, and Texas students must pass this test prior to receiving their high school diploma. This document is one in a series of Instructional Strategies Guides designed to familiarize Texas educators with the types of strategies employed in assessing learner mastery of TEAMS objectives and to provide suggested instructional activities that can be used to promote mastery of those objectives. This guide focuses on the reading and writing objectives measured by the English language arts section of the TEAMS Exit Level Test. It provides a detailed description of the test items used to measure each objective. The ten reading objectives are subsumed in six skill areas: (1) main idea; (2) word meaning (contextual analysis, structural analysis); (3) detail (specifics, sequence); (4) inference (conclusions, fact and opinion); (5) reference usage (selecting reference sources, using reference sources); and (6) analysis of literature. The eight writing objectives are subsumed in five skill areas: (1) mechanics (capitalization, punctuation, and spelling); (2) English usage; (3) sentence formation (completion and combination); (4) proofreading; and (5) organization. The following information is provided for each objective: (1) a description of the objective; (2) a sample item; (3) test questions; (4) answer choices; (5) answer analysis for the sample item; (6) instructional emphases; and (7) possible instructional activities. (JAZ)

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INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES GUIDE

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS
EXIT LEVEL

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William B. Travis Building
1701 North Congress Avenue
Austin, Texas 78701

1986

TM 870 037

TEAMS INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES GUIDE

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

EXIT LEVEL

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Under contract with the Texas Education Agency, the Information Services Division of National Computer Systems subcontracted with IOX Assessment Associates to develop this TEAMS Instructional Strategies Guide.

Key reviewers of early drafts of the guide were Toni Amodio, Pat Mengwasser, Patricia Sachse Porter, Laurie Richard, and Lannie van Allen of the Texas Education Agency.

Appreciation is extended to the following Texas educators who supplied, by mail, systematic reactions to a near-final version of this guide. These educators, in addition to suggesting modifications in the guide, identified a number of possible instructional activities which were added to the guide. The reviewers were:

Al Suttles	-	Austin I.S.D.
Dixie Tharp	-	Belton I.S.D.
Brenda Wilson	-	Bovina I.S.D.
Pat Blacklock	-	Corpus Christi I.S.D.
Vivian Eubanks	-	Corpus Christi I.S.D.
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INTRODUCTION

During the period 1980-1985 Texas had a criterion-referenced testing program designed to measure minimum basic skills in mathematics, reading, and writing. That program was known as the Texas Assessment of Basic Skills (TABS).

Beginning with the 1985-1986 school year, a new assessment program, the Texas Educational Assessment of Minimum Skills (TEAMS), was instituted to measure minimum basic skills in mathematics, reading, and writing in Grades 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, and 11. The test given to students in Grade 11 is an exit-level examination and must be passed by Texas students prior to their being awarded a high school diploma. This assessment program was mandated by House Bill 72, passed by the Second Called Session of the 68th Texas Legislature in July 1984.

To implement the TEAMS testing program, an extensive developmental phase was begun during the 1984-1985 school year. Basic skills objectives were selected after a thorough review of the State Board of Education Rules for Curriculum, GE4 450 01, (Essential Elements). Measurement specifications were written, test items were developed, and field testing was conducted. School district personnel from across the state were active participants in all aspects of the program. The TEAMS tests were approved by the State Board of Education.

Because of the significance of the TEAMS examinations, TEA officials decided to provide Texas educators with instructional-strategies guides dealing with those examinations. These guides were designed to provide (1) a clear description of the way in which TEAMS objectives are assessed plus (2) instructional considerations and activities that might be

used by Texas educators in designing instructional strategies to promote mastery of TEAMS objectives. This instructional-strategies guide focuses on the reading and writing objectives measured by the English language arts section of the TEAMS Exit Level Test.

For each reading and writing objective assessed in the TEAMS Exit Level Test, a detailed description of the kinds of test items used to measure that objective has been provided. In addition, for each objective a brief instructional analysis has been provided along with possible instructional activities that might be employed to promote student mastery of the objective.

It must be stressed that the instructionally related components of this guide are in no way intended to be prescriptive. Texas educators will vary substantially in the ways that they promote learner mastery of the TEAMS objectives. The segments of the guide which deal with instructional possibilities should be viewed, therefore, only as potential approaches to the TEAMS objectives.

Components of the Instructional Strategies Guide

There are ten TEAMS reading objectives in the exit level test. Each of these objectives has been categorized into one of six skill areas. In two of these skill areas, main idea and inference, there is only one objective. All other skill areas contain two objectives. The distribution of the reading objectives per skill area is seen below:

READING

SKILL AREA	OBJECTIVE
Main Idea	Main Idea

Word Meaning	Contextual Analysis Structural Analysis
Detail	Specifics Sequence
Inference	Conclusions Fact and Opinion
Reference Usage	Selecting Reference Sources Using Reference Sources
Analysis of Literature	Analysis of Literature

There are eight TEAMS writing objectives in the Exit Level Test. Each of these objectives has been categorized in one of five skill areas. In two of these skill areas, mechanics and sentence formation, there are multiple objectives. In the other three skill areas there are only single objectives. The distribution of the writing objectives per skill area is seen below:

WRITING

SKILL AREA	OBJECTIVE
Mechanics	Capitalization Punctuation Spelling
English Usage	English Usage
Sentence Formation	Sentence Completion Sentence Combination
Proofreading	Proofreading
Organization	Organization

For each of the writing objectives included in the English Language Arts section of the TEAMS Exit Level Test, a set of specific components has been provided in the guide. Each of these components will be briefly described.

Description of the objective. A short description of an objective initiates consideration of that objective. Typically presented in one or two sentences, this description provides a succinct overview of the objective's focus.

Sample item. Following the description of each objective, an illustrative sample item is provided. This item was constructed according to the test specifications for the objective, hence is representative of the TEAMS test items which will be used to measure students' mastery of the objective. By reviewing the sample item along with the brief description of the objective, one can ascertain the general nature of the objective and how it is assessed.

Test questions. To provide a more detailed view of how each TEAMS objective is assessed, the next set of descriptive information deals with the "stimulus" segment of each test item, that is, an item's test question. The most important elements in the item's test questions will be listed. If there are any lengthy sets of content with which educators should be familiar, for example, the specific punctuation rules eligible for testing, this content will also be described.

Answer choices. The next section of descriptive information deals with the "response" segment of each test item, that is, an item's answer choices. The most important characteristics of an item's answer choices will be described. For instance, in addition to noting that there will be one correct answer choice, the descriptive information will specify the categories of incorrect answer choices. All incorrect answer choices will fall into one of these categories.

Answer Analysis for Sample Item. After the description of answer choices in general terms, there will be a specific analysis of the answer choices from the sample item. This

analysis will explain why the correct answer is right and why the incorrect answers are wrong.

Instructional emphases. An effort has been made to describe one or more instructional considerations relevant to the design of instructional sequences for each TEAMS objective. These instructional analyses are not intended to represent the only important points associated with instruction aimed at a particular objective. Yet, it is hoped that an educator's thinking about a given objective might be stimulated as a consequence of these brief discussions.

Possible instructional activities. The final set of materials for each TEAMS objective consists of several possible instructional activities that Texas educators may wish to consider as they organize their instructional plans. For ease of identification, each activity has been given a name.

Use of the Instructional Strategies Guide

It is hoped that this TEAMS Instructional Strategies Guide will accomplish several missions. First, the guide should enable Texas educators to become familiar with the types of assessment strategies employed to assess learner mastery of the TEAMS English language arts objectives. For those educators wishing to become even more knowledgeable about the ways in which the TEAMS objectives are tested, the TEAMS objectives and measurement specifications, which are available at cost from the Texas Education Agency, should be consulted. For most educators, however, the level of detail provided herein will prove adequate to promote the degree of clarity needed to design on-target and effective instructional sequences. A second goal of the TEAMS Instructional Strategies Guide is to provide suggestions for instructional strategies that can be used to promote mastery of TEAMS objectives.

The specific setting in which a given district chooses to instruct the TEAMS objectives, whether in regular classes or TEAMS-focused review/remedial classes, will influence the way in which the materials in this guide will be employed. The guide is organized in a manner which will permit flexible use.

The materials contained in the following pages were developed by experienced educators, then reviewed and revised by Texas teachers and curriculum specialists.

TEAMS ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS OBJECTIVES

READING: EXIT LEVEL

The TEAMS exit level reading objectives are measured by items that generally present a reading selection or a display followed by a multiple-choice question based on the selection or display.

The objectives tested in this part of the TEAMS exit level examination according to skill area are:

- Main Idea
- Word Meaning
  - Contextual Analysis
  - Structural Analysis
- Detail
  - Specifics
  - Sequence
- Inference
  - Conclusions
  - Fact and Opinion
- Reference Usage
  - Selecting Reference Sources
  - Using Reference Sources
- Analysis of Literature

For most reading items students will be presented with reading selections that are similar to those that students might encounter in school, at home, or in their community. Although the selections will vary in length depending on the skill being tested, these selections will never exceed 200 words. The selections will vary in readability, but they are constructed to range from roughly a ninth- to an eleventh-grade level. Following each test item will be four answer choices, only one of which will be correct.

The sources from which the reading selections are drawn will vary slightly from objective to objective. The following chart lists which types of materials may be adapted for reading selections for those objectives whose items are adapted from actual reading selections.

Eligible Materials	Objectives					
	Main Idea	Specifics	Sequence	Conclusions	Fact and Opinion	Analysis of Literature
Textbooks	x	x	x		x	x
Magazines	x	x	x	x	x	x
Newspapers	x	x	x	x	x	x
Pamphlets	x	x	x	x	x	
Letters	x	x	x	x	x	
Fiction books	x			x	x	x
Non-fiction books	x	x	x	x	x	x
Instructions		x	x			
Directions		x	x			
Poetry books						x
Plays						x

*An "x" marks an eligible source for a particular objective.

SKILL AREA: MAIN IDEA

Main Idea: Identify the main idea.

This objective requires students to select the best statement of a reading selection's main idea.

Sample Item

People in Travis who are dependent on public transportation know how hard it is to get around. More than 500,000 people now live in the Travis area, a 50 percent increase since 1973. This increase has resulted in nearly 70 percent more vehicles competing for space on Travis' streets and highways than 10 years ago. Transportation in Travis is becoming everybody's problem. The increased traffic has resulted in increases in highway construction, traffic accidents, insurance rates, and air pollution.

Despite heavy traffic and limited parking, public transportation in Travis has failed to lure people from behind the wheel. The reason is simple. Many people commute to places that are not served by Travis' public transit system. The Travis Transit System is now taking steps to make major changes in the transit system.

Which of the following is the best statement of the main idea of this selection?

A. The number of cars and people in Travis has doubled since 1963.

B. Because Travis has serious transportation problems, its public transit system is being revised.

C. Public transportation is the only possible solution to the transportation problems facing Travis today.

D. Travis' traffic problem has led to an increase in air pollution.

Test Questions

1. Main-idea items will consist of a boxed reading selection that communicates a single, central idea which is explicitly stated in one sentence or is implied in the selection as a whole. This selection will be followed by the question, "Which of the following is the best statement of the main idea of this selection?"

Answer Choices

1. The correct answer choice for an item will be the statement that is accurate, relevant, and of the most appropriate scope in relation to the other answer choices. For a selection in which the main idea is explicitly stated in one sentence, the correct answer will paraphrase the main-idea sentence from the selection. For a selection in which the main idea is implied, the correct answer will represent that implied main idea.

2. An incorrect answer choice may be one of the following types:

   -- Contradicted: A statement that is contradicted by information in the text.

   -- Inappropriate in Scope: A statement that is (1) too narrow, hence, does not account for all the important information in the selection, or (2) too broad, hence, accounts for a more general viewpoint than is presented in the selection.

   -- Irrelevant: A statement that introduces information not included in the text. The statement must contain at least one concept from the selection.

Answer Analysis for Sample Item

1. Answer choice A is contradicted by information presented in the reading selection. The answer states that the number of people and cars in Travis has doubled since 1963. However, according to the selection, the number of people has increased by 50 percent since 1973. Thus, the information presented in this answer choice is inaccurate.

2. Answer choice B is a correct statement of the main idea of this selection because it synthesizes the important information from both paragraphs of the reading selection. The first paragraph describes the growing transportation problems in Travis. The first two sentences of the second paragraph explain why public transportation has

not solved the problem to date. All of this information is summarized in the clause "Because Travis has serious transportation problems." The main clause of choice B states that the public transportation system is being revised. This idea is a clear restatement of the final sentence of the reading selection. Thus, the opening clause and the following main clause of choice B effectively state the main idea of the selection by synthesizing its content into a single sentence.

3. Answer choice C is inappropriate in scope because it is too broad to be a statement of the selection's main idea. Although the selection focuses on the role of public transportation in Travis' transportation problem, it does not go so far as to suggest that public transportation is the only solution to them.

4. Answer choice D is also inappropriate in scope. However, this answer is too narrow. Although the selection does mention the increase in air pollution, it is only one of many details from the reading selection and does not summarize its central message.

Instructional Emphases

The ability to grasp the main idea of a reading selection is a fundamental reading skill. A student should not view a paragraph as a string of sentences, but as a cohesive whole generated by a central, unifying theme or message.

You may be able to foster your students' mastery of this objective by encouraging them to read a selection to discern its central message, that is, main idea. (Some paragraphs are merely a set of loosely related sentences.) The majority of paragraphs do contain a main idea. Hence, urge your students to read carefully and to search for the main thrust of the paragraphs they read.

A reading selection's main idea may be directly stated in a single sentence in the selection. Alternately, the reader may have to synthesize ideas expressed in various sentences in the selection to determine its main idea. The words used to express the main idea of a selection need not be stated directly in the selection, as long as the unifying message is expressed.

It is important for your students to realize that the first sentence of a selection is not always its main idea. This is particularly true in the more advanced writing found in the TEAMS Exit Level Test where main ideas are often inferred from various elements in the selection. Students should be warned against selecting an answer choice on the

Exit Level Test just because it includes a detail taken directly from the passage. Many students have a tendency to look for a direct match between a word in the selection and an answer choice, then select that answer. You may be able to help your students by emphasizing the difference between the main idea and a supporting detail--and to remind students that details from the selection may appear as distractors on the examination.

You may also want to explain to your students that a main idea can be stated in more than one way. For example, if a paragraph discusses the events and changes that took place during the 1960s, its main idea statement could be any of the following sentences.

> Many changes took place in our society during the 1960s.
>
> The 1960s were a period of unrest and social change.
>
> During the 1960s, our society underwent a great deal of upheaval and changed in numerous ways.

By shifting the position of clauses such as "during the 1960s" and employing synonyms (such as "upheaval" for "unrest" and "numerous" for "many"), three versions of the same idea have been created. This idea forms the central message of a paragraph characterizing a particular decade. The various significant events that could be listed in a paragraph describing the 1960s are details that support this unifying theme, or main idea.

Possible Instructional Activities

Shaping Up

First, hand out sheets with columns labeled "contradicted," "too broad or too narrow," and "irrelevant." Then display on an overhead projector several paragraphs with possible choices for main-idea statements. Ask students to classify each answer on their three-category response sheets. Then discuss reasons for the wrong answers.

Next, distribute copies of a paragraph to the class (or display the paragraph on an overhead projector) and ask for a volunteer to form a main idea statement about the paragraph. Ask a second student to comment on this suggestion. This student should state whether the sentence adequately expresses the main idea of the paragraph and, if not, why it is not adequate (for example, "It's too broad."). If the second student does not think that the sentence is an adequate expression of the main idea, that student should suggest how it could be changed to be a better main-idea statement. Continue this process until the class agrees that the statement clearly and adequately expresses the main idea.

Indicate, as the situation arises, that sometimes two or more ways of stating the main idea are equally acceptable.

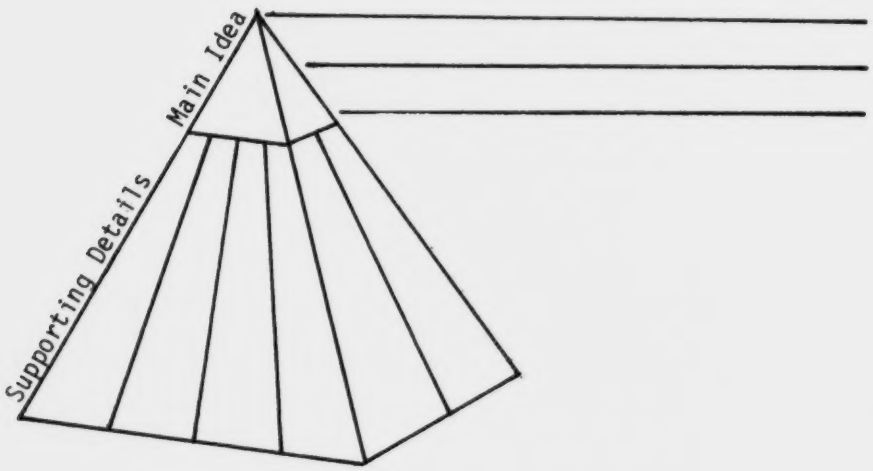
Accurate Paraphrasing

This activity provides practice in paraphrasing. You will need to emphasize to your students that it is possible to create a variety of acceptable statements to capture a reading selection's main idea. Encourage students to derive their own idea of a selection's main ideas then consider potential paraphrases.

Provide copies of a list of five or more sentences that could be main idea statements. Below each sentence, leave enough space for students to write a paraphrased version of the statement. Ask students to write each sentence in another way, being careful not to change the statement's essential meaning. Then write each sentence on the board, one at a time, with possible paraphrased versions offered by students. Discuss how reasonable each paraphrase is. Erase versions that are deemed unreasonable. Try to obtain two or three accurate paraphrases for each sentence before moving on to the next sentence. Emphasize the essential equivalence between accurate paraphrases of the same statement.

Parapyramids

Distribute copies of a paragraph in which the main idea is supported by details that answer several questions beginning with who, where, when, what, why, and how. Below the paragraph should appear a model of a pyramid. At the top of the pyramid should be a space for writing the main idea. Below that, forming the foundation of the pyramid, should be spaces for the supporting details in the paragraph.

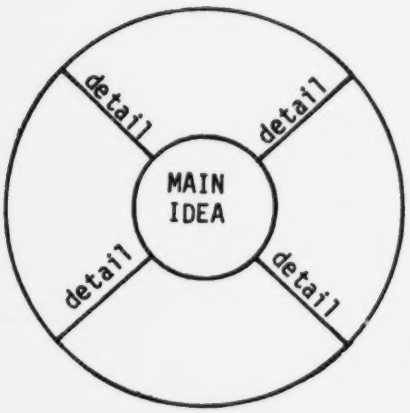


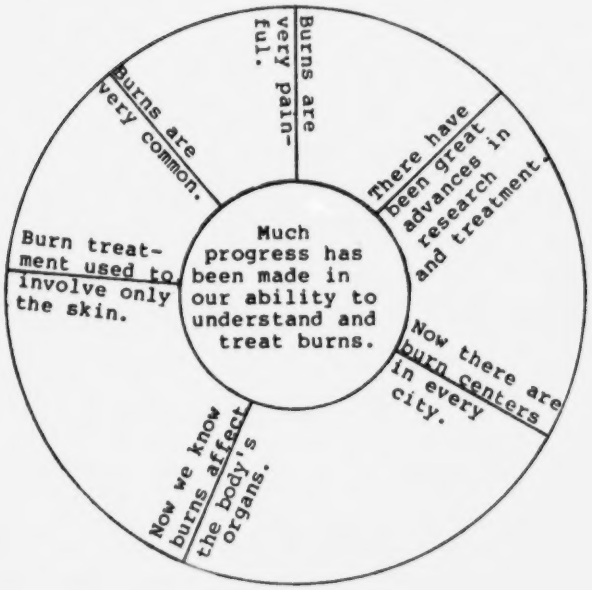
Provide as many foundation sections as there are supporting details. Draw three lines to the side of the tip for the main idea statement.

Students are to fill in every base section with a word or phrase representing a detail, then write a main idea statement on the lines provided.

Parawheels

The above activity can also be done with a wheel model, with the main idea as the hub and details as the spokes.




Much progress has been made in our ability to understand and treat burns.
Burns are very common.
Burns are very painful.
There have been great advances in research and treatment.
Now there are burn centers in every city.
Now we know burns affect the body's organs.
Burn treatment used to involve only the skin.

Supportive Details

This activity reinforces the concept of main idea by requiring students to think about how one uses supporting details to develop a central message. Write a main idea statement on the board. Begin by using a sentence closest to your students' current reading level and progress in subsequent lessons to sentences that are increasingly abstract and complex. For example, a main idea statement that can be easily supported might be, "Mary's first day back at school was a disaster." A more complex statement might be, "There are many factors to consider when choosing a future career," or "Reading serves a variety of purposes in people's lives."

Ask for sentences that might appear in a paragraph whose central theme is expressed in the statement. Discuss whether each suggestion is an appropriate detail and whether it supports, explains, or illustrates the main idea.

Having practiced in one direction, that is, "What details does it take to support this main idea statement?" it is important to practice in a direction more consistent with the TEAMS objective being tested. Thus, present a series of related details (based on a central idea) to students, perhaps in paragraph form, then ask them individually to create a statement that captures the main idea of the related details.

That's the Idea!

Read orally a paragraph from a textbook or newspaper/ magazine article. Write five sentences on the board, one of which states the main idea of the paragraph. (It is important that students see as well as hear the selections with which they are working.) The other four should be of the following types: (1) too broad in scope; (2) too narrow in scope; (3) contradicts information stated in the paragraph; and (4) is not supported by the paragraph.

Ask the students to identify the sentence that is "too narrow," "too broad," and so on through the wrong answer choices until they arrive at the correct statement of the main idea.

This activity focuses on the use of a process of elimination to arrive at the best statement of a main idea. Some teachers may not wish to foster such an approach to the determination of a reading selection's main idea, although a "compare-the-answer-choices" strategy doubtlessly will prove effective in answering TEAMS items measuring this objective.

SKILL AREA: WORD MEANING

The skill area of word meaning includes two objectives, namely, contextual analysis and structural analysis. The contextual-analysis objective deals with the student's ability to discern the meaning of words from the context in which they appear. The structural-analysis objective deals with the student's ability to discern the meaning of words from an analysis of roots and affixes.

Contextual Analysis: Uses context to understand the meaning of words.

This objective requires the student to determine an appropriate definition of a word by analyzing the context in which the word appears.

Sample Item

> Tom has a reputation for being a practical joker. Many of his friends have been victims of his tricks, and they are growing tired of his waggish behavior. Tom has never done anything mean, but some of his friends are afraid that Tom's playful actions might hurt someone. However, Tom simply ignores them and continues to plot his pranks.

What is the best meaning of the word waggish as used above?

A. mischievous

B. boring

C. cruel

D. mature

Test Questions

1. A test item will consist of a boxed reading selection containing an underlined word whose meaning may be determined by analyzing the context in which the word is

presented. The selection will be followed by the question, "Which of the following is the best definition of (the underlined word) as used above?"

2. The selection containing the underlined word will provide clear context clues for determining the meaning of the word in question. The selection will not contain an exact synonym or antonym for the underlined word.

3. The underlined word will be one not apt to be known by examinees, that is, not on the TEA Cumulative Vocabulary List through grade 12. All the other words in the reading selection, other than proper nouns, will be drawn from this list.

Answer Choices

1. The correct answer choice will be an accurate definition of the underlined word as used in the context of the reading selection.

2. Incorrect answer choices will be one of the following types of definitions:

   -- Contradicted: A definition that is opposite in meaning from the actual definition of the underlined word.

   -- Similar: A definition of a word that is similar in spelling to the underlined word.

   -- Incomplete: A definition that does not account for enough of the selection's information relevant to understanding the meaning of the underlined word.

   -- Irrelevant: A plausible but incorrect definition for the underlined word.

Answer Analysis for Sample Item

1. Answer choice A is correct because the word "mischievous" means "able or tending to cause annoyance, trouble, or minor injury; irresponsibly playful." This definition clearly captures several aspects of Tom's behavior such as his practical jokes and playful pranks.

2. Answer choice B is irrelevant. Although Tom's friends are described as being "tired" of his behavior, they are more annoyed than bored. Furthermore, the plotting and playing of practical jokes does not represent boring or dull behavior.

3. Answer choice C is incomplete. Although Tom's actions "might hurt someone," and thus, he fails to be thoughtful, Tom "has never done anything mean." In fact, the selection characterizes his actions as "playful." Therefore, the word "cruel" too harshly defines Tom's behavior.

4. Answer choice D is contradicted by the content of the reading selection. Tom's behaviors are "playful," a quality not generally associated with maturity.

Instructional Emphases

Vocabulary development plays a central role in the educational process. As students sharpen their skills and enter new realms of knowledge, they become familiar with an ever-increasing number of terms. Coupled with this acquisition of vocabulary items should be a growing ability to determine the meanings of unfamiliar words with the aid of contextual clues.

Contextual clues are other words or phrases contained in the reading passage where the new term appears that help the reader determine the meaning of the term. Linking words, one type of context clue, indicate relationships between terms. For example, the linking words "but" and "however" establish a relationship of difference; they suggest that you will find, somewhere in the selection, a meaning contradictory to that of the unfamiliar word whose meaning you are attempting to infer:

> Her brothers thought their father talked all the time, but with her he was quite taciturn. (The word "but" suggests that "taciturn" is the opposite of talkative.)
>
> John Wood enjoys giving gifts to his friends. His brother, however, is parsimonious. (The word "however" suggests that "parsimonious" is the opposite of generous.)

Other contextual clues are descriptive words or phrases indicating the meaning of a new term. These descriptive clues may appear in the form of a situation that exemplifies the unfamiliar word or as a descriptive phrase that refers to the word.

Although synonyms (words equivalent in meaning) and antonyms (words opposite in meaning) are frequently used as context clues, such clues are specifically precluded as context clues for test items measuring this TEAMS objective.

(See the description of test questions for this objective.) Thus, although you may wish to familiarize your students with the utility of using synonyms and antonyms as context clues in other settings, you might want to alert the students that antonyms and synonyms will not be employed as context clues in the TEAMS contextual analysis items.

> The dog's coat, with its multicolored patches on a solid background, was in a harlequin pattern. (The word "harlequin" is defined within the sentence.)

Encourage your students to try to grasp the meanings of new words by paying close attention to contextual clues in their reading. For students who are having substantial difficulty in mastering this TEAMS objective, more simple tasks would doubtlessly be helpful.

Possible Instructional Activities

The Definition Challenge

In this activity, students must match the definitions of unfamiliar words with the sentences containing those words. Create two lists of sentences. Each sentence should contain one unfamiliar word and context clues as to the word's meaning. Write the definition of each word (without naming the word itself) on a slip of paper. Divide the class into two teams. Give each team a list of sentences and the cards containing definitions of the unfamiliar words in those sentences. Have the teams match the definitions with the unfamiliar words. One point is awarded for each correct match. The game can be made more difficult by providing teams with some definitions that do not match any of the unfamiliar words. Teams must correctly identify those definitions as ones they cannot match.

Making Sense

This activity is designed to help students practice using examples and descriptive phrases as context clues to determine word meaning. Provide lists of sentences, each of which contains a nonsense word plus contextual clues as to the meaning of the word. The clue might be (1) an example of a situation created by or resulting from the word or (2) a description that provides additional information (for example, "James poured the batter into a pan and baked it in the drinzer for 30 minutes."). Have each students read the sentences and write a definition for each nonsense word.

The definition must make sense within the context of the sentence. As a class activity, students can share their definitions and determine whether or not each one is acceptable. You may wish to ask students to identify the clues that helped them create their definitions. Ask students to check their definitions by substituting the definition for the nonsense word in a sentence.

Verbal Repertoire-Building

Have students skim the dictionary to find unfamiliar words. You might want to specify what part of speech the words should be, such as adjectives, verbs, or nouns. Students are then to write a sentence containing a new word and sufficient context clues to indicate the meaning of the word. Call on individual students to write their sentences on the board. Have the other students try to determine the meaning of the unfamiliar word.

Word Attack

Have students choose an article from a magazine, newspaper, or book. Tell students to skim the article for unfamiliar words. Direct students to make a list of the unfamiliar words they find, then write a definition for each word based on the context clues in the selection. Subsequently, students should check their inferred definition in the dictionary.

Definition Derby

Create two sets of cards or slips of paper. The first set should consist of sentences containing unfamiliar terms (one per sentence, underlined) and contextual clues. The second set should contain definitions of the terms. For example:

Set 1	Set 2
The boy was somnambulating when his mother found him in the hallway and gently guided him back to bed.	sleepwalking

Distribute the second set--one card to each student--and place the first set in a hat or bowl. You begin by taking a card from the hat and copying the sentence it contains on the board. Ask who has the definition of the underlined word on their card. The student who has the definition picks a card from the hat and writes the next sentence on

the board. Have students list the sentences and meanings on papers to keep in their notebooks. You might want to follow up on this activity with a quiz the next day.

Structural Analysis: Use word structure to identify words.

This objective requires the student to analyze the base word and affixes of a complex word in order to determine an appropriate definition of the complex word.

Sample Item

What is the best definition of the following word?

clothier

A. one who makes or sells garments

B. to be nearer to something

C. to dislike someone or something

D. to be without clothes

Test Questions

1. A test item will consist of a complex word (whose meaning may be determined by analyzing the structure of the word) preceded by the question, "What is the best definition of the following word?"

2. A complex word may be defined as a base word to which one or more affixes (prefixes and/or suffixes) have been added. This complex word will not be one that is on the TEA Cumulative Vocabulary List. The base of this complex word, however, will be selected from the TEA Cumulative Vocabulary List through grade eight. This base word will be clearly recognizable in the affixed form. There may be minor changes in the last few letters of the base word to accommodate the addition of a suffix. No spelling change will be made to accommodate a prefix.

3. The eligible affixes include many common prefixes and suffixes. Eligible affixes (and their meanings) are found on the next three pages.

The eligible prefixes follow:

a-	on
a-, an-	not, without
ab-	from
ambi-, amphi-	both, around
ante-	before
anti-	against
auto-	self
be-	make, thoroughly, all around
bi-, bin-, bis-	two, twice
by-	near, aside, from
circum-	around
co-	together with, at the same time; equal
counter-	against, in return
de-	do the reverse, undo; take away
di-	two
dis-	reversal or undoing of an act; stop, refuse to
dys-	bad
en-	put on or into, surround, close in; make; add strength to a meaning
ex-	earlier; former
extra-	outside, beyond
fore-	before, in advance, front
forth-	forward, onward
hyper-	over, beyond
hypo-	under, too little
in-	in, into, within, toward
in-, il-, im-, ir-	not, without
infra-	below
inter-	between, among
intro-, intra-	within
mid-	middle of, halfway through
mis-	wrongly; poorly bad
mono-	one
multi-	many
non-	not
off-	from
on-	on
out-	greater or better than; away from the center; located or set near or beyond
over-	too much, to a great degree; above, across or beyond; become upside down
poly-	many
post-	after, following
pre-	before; ahead of
pro-	for, in favor of; in place of
pseudo-	false
re-	again, back
self-	used with nouns and adjectives to show that (1) the one performing an act is the one affected by it, or (2) the action is done only through its own effort or power
semi-	half
sub-	almost, nearly, less than; below or lower; further divided into smaller parts
super-	greater in quantity, size, strength, etc. specially, unusually
trans-	over, across, through
tri-	having three; happening every third time
ultra-	beyond
un-	not, opposite of; change an action to the opposite of
under-	below, less in quality; not enough; inside
vice-	in place of
with-	back, away

The eligible suffixes follow:

-able, -ible	that can or may be done, that exists as a condition	-ery	place where, product of action, state of, act, trade, occupation
-acious	tends to be	-ess	female
-acy, -cy	office, rank of, state of	-et, ette	litte, small
-ade	result, product, thing made; process, action	-etic	adjective ending
		-fic	making, causing
-age	act of, state of; cost of, amount of; place of	-fold	increase, multiplication
		-ful	a quantity sufficient to fill; full of; tending or like to
-al	relating to		
-ance, -ence	act of, condition of, state of, or quality of	-fy, -ify	make, become; cause to feel or have
		-hood	state of, quality of, condition of
-ant, -ent,	person or thing that does something, acts in a particular way, is acted upon or is used for; doing, showing, having; being or acting in a particular way	-ic	of the nature of, characterized by
		-ier	person who, place where, thing which
		-ing	product or result of action; material for; the act of one who does what a given verb describes
-ar	characterized by, relating to		
-ar, -er, -or	a person or thing that does something; a person concerned with; a person who resides in or on	-ion, -tion	act, condition, or result of
		-ious, -ous	having or characterized by; full of
-ard, -art	person who	-ish	like; somewhat, rather; of, belonging to
-arian	person who, place where, thing which	-ism	the act or result of; the state, condition or quality of; theory or belief
-ary	characterized by, relating to		
-ate	become or cause to become	-ist	one who practices, one whose profession is; one who believes in, one who is a student of
-ate	state of, quality of, condition of		
-atory	process, action place where	-ity	state, quality
-cy	state of, condition of	-ive	having the nature of; quality of or tending to
-cy, -y	process, action		
-dom	region, collectivity; state of	-ize	make into or like, become; act in a certain way, treat, engage in; combine with, subject to the action of
-ed	characterized by		
-en	make or become; gain, cause to have; made of, like		
		-less	free from, without; unable to do or to be

-let	small	-th	a state or quality of being or having; an order or place of a number in a series
-like	similar to		
-ling	small or lesser; of		
-long	direction, duration		
-ly	each, every; like, similar	-ty	quality or condition of; 10, 10 times
-ment	result of, act of; means of, thing used for; condition, state of being	-ward, wards	in the direction of
		-ware	manufactured products made of or from
-most	superlative ending		
-ness	quality or state of being	-ways	manner or direction
		-wise	direction or manner of
-ous	possessing the qualities of	-wright	workman, craftsman
-ry	collection of	-y	the act or action of; the state or quality of being; full of, characterized by; having the characteristics of; like
-ship	state or quality of; rank, art, or skill		
-some	like, same		
-ster	one belonging to, characterized by		
-teen	added to ten		

Answer Choices

1. The correct answer choice will be an accurate definition of the complex word.

2. Incorrect answer choices will be one of the following types of definitions:

   -- Contradicted: A definition that is opposite in meaning from the actual definition of the complex word.

   -- Similar: A definition of a word that is similar in spelling to the complex word.

   -- Incomplete: A definition that does not account for all parts of the complex word. This type of definition will typically exclude consideration of how an affix affects the meaning of the complex word.

   -- Irrelevant: A plausible but incorrect definition for the complex word.

Answer Analysis for Sample Item

1. Answer choice A is correct. The suffix ier means the "person who, place where, or thing which." A clothier is the person who provides clothes for people to wear.

2. Answer choice B defines "closer," a word that is similar in appearance to clothier.

3. Answer choice C defines "loathe" a word similar in appearance to clothier.

4. Answer choice D is incorrect because, although involving the word clothes, it defines "naked," a term essentially irrelevant to clothier.

Instructional Emphases

Structural analysis requires combining the meaning of a word's root with the meaning of its affix. Learning the meanings of prefixes and suffixes is a necessary prerequisite to acquiring competence in this skill. (See the list of eligible affixes on pp. 24-26.)

To become skilled in the structural analysis of new words, your students must learn how to distinguish between an unfamiliar word's root and its affix. Students will need to be taught the meaning of prefix, suffix, and affix. They will also need to see how a simple root word that they know can be linked to an affix so that a more complex "unknown" word is created. Give your students practice in identifying roots of words. Also, familiarize them with the more commonly used affixes found in the list of eligible affixes for this objective.

While students should be encouraged to look up unfamiliar words in the dictionary as they encounter them, it is essential for a reader to possess both structural and contextual analysis skills. A dictionary is not always available. Moreover, it is neither convenient nor time-efficient to run to another source every time a new word appears in a reading selection. Allow your students to experiment with ways to approach unfamiliar terms while they develop confidence in their own word-attack abilities.

Possible Instructional Activities

Four-A-Day

Each day, during a period of time devoted to the study of affixes, write two prefixes and two suffixes (taken from the list of eligible affixes) on the board. As students enter the classroom, they are to begin work independently. For each affix, they are to think of three words containing it, then, using a discovery approach, try to determine the meaning of the affix.

Example:

dis - is on the board. A student thinks of:

disappointed
disarmament
displeased,

and thinks that maybe "dis" means "the opposite of."

After allowing five to 10 minutes for independent work, call on a student to read three words and a tentative definition for the first affix. Allow other students to offer further examples and adjusted definitions until the class is in agreement (with correction from you, if necessary). Repeat the process with the remaining affixes.

Final definitions and representative words should go into an "Affixes" section in each student's notebook.

Affix News

As a homework assignment for students who are having difficulty with this objective, ask each student to bring a newspaper or magazine article to class. The article should contain at least five words containing prefixes and/or suffixes. Have each student (1) underline the words containing affixes, (2) list these words on a separate sheet of paper, and (3) under each word, write the sentence in which the word appears and a structural analysis of the word. For example:

1. mismanagement

   Because of mismanagement, the company eventually went bankrupt.

   mis- - poorly; wrongly; bad
   manage - to handle or direct
   -ment - condition; state of being

(You might also have students include a comment regarding contextual clues as to the meaning of the underlined term, such as, "Because the company went bankrupt, the way it was managed was probably not good.")

Fill in the Affix

Provide lists of sentences. Each sentence should contain a root word with a blank where an affix should be. Give

students the definition of the complete word and ask them to fill in the appropriate prefix or suffix. For example:

The circus tent is _____colored.	(of many colors)
_____eating can cause obesity.	(eating too much)
He thinks often of his child___.	(state of being a child)

After students have completed the exercise and understand how it works, have them write a few of their own sentences and exchange papers with other students.

Prefix Versatility

You may choose a prefix or root such as those illustrated in the chart below as an example of the versatility of prefixes. Students may search for words containing the selected prefix in textbooks, mass media, and dictionaries, particularly unabridged dictionaries. Students may discover that some prefixes are used in one subject field more than another subject field. For example, many scientific words contain the prefix "circum."

PREFIX	SCIENCE	MATHEMATICS	ENGLISH	SOCIAL STUDIES
ante (before)	anterior	antenumber	antecedent	antebellum
anti (against)	antivenin	anticlastic	anticlimax	antiforeignism
circum (around)	circulatory	circumcenter	circumflex	circumference
poly (much, many)	polyunsaturated	polygon	polyphonic	monopoly
sub (under, below)	subliminal	subdivide	subhead	subcultural
trans (across, beyond, through)	transformer	transposition	transcribe	transaction

Flashing Affixes

Your students might find it helpful to make their own flashcards of the prefixes and suffixes eligible for testing on the TEAMS Exit Level Test. On one side would be the affix; on the other, its meaning. These cards can be used for independent practice, pair practice, or small-group practice. Students can keep their cards in two bundles, with affixes they have not yet learned separate from affixes they know well.

SKILL AREA: DETAIL

The skill area of detail includes two objectives, namely, specifics and sequence. The specifics objective calls for the student to answer specific questions based on the details in a reading selection. The sequence objective calls for the student to answer questions based on the sequence of events contained in a reading selection.

Specifics: Identify specific details.

This objective requires the student to locate a specific detail from a reading selection in order to answer a question.

Sample Item

> Big Bend National Park, located at the southern edge of the United States, is the largest national park in Texas. The park is bordered by the Rio Grande, which flows through steep canyons and makes a sharp bend south of Marathon.
>
> Many species of cactus can be found in the low areas of the park. Juniper, pinyon, oak, Douglas fir, Arizona cypress, and quaking aspen grow at higher elevations. Deer, coyote, and over 350 types of birds may be found among the magnificent scenery.
>
> The park administration building at Panther Junction has exhibits for visitors and is open daily. There is a visitor station at Chisos Basin, about 11 kilometers off the connecting road. Rio Grande Village, 32 kilometers southeast of Panther Junction, has a campground, store, and showers. Castolon is about 69 kilometers southwest of Panther Junction and has a campground and a small store.
>
> The trip between the town of Alpine, the park, and the town of Marathon is about 306 kilometers. To get the most out of your visit, plan to spend at least one night at the park.

According to this selection, where is a visitor station located?

A. Elm City

B. Chisos Basin

C. Rio Grande Junction

D. Castolon

Test Questions

1. A test item will consist of a boxed reading selection that provides a series of details. Following the selection will be a question that begins with the phrase, "According to this selection," and asks about a detail in the selection.

2. The question will require the student to answer: who, what, when, where, how, how much, how many, why, or which. The specific detail needed to answer the question will be information such as a name, an object, a location, a time, a characteristic, or a quantity.

Answer Choices

1. The correct answer choice will be the detail from the selection that correctly answers the question.

2. The incorrect answer choices will be one of the following types:

   -- Incorrect Detail: An accurate description of a detail that is contained in the reading selection but does not answer the question.

   -- Imprecise Detail: A detail from the reading selection that has been changed.

   -- Irrelevant Detail: A detail that is not contained in the reading selection, even though it may appear to answer the question.

Answer Analysis for Sample Item

1. Answer choice A is an irrelevant location because Elm City is not referred to in the reading selection.

2. Answer choice B is the correct detail because the third sentence of the second paragraph states that "There is a visitor station at Chisos Basin..."

3. Answer choice C is an imprecise detail. Rio Grande Junction is an altered restatement of Rio Grande Village.

4. Answer choice D is an incorrect detail. Castolon (see the third paragraph) has a campground and a small store, but no visitor station.

Instructional Emphases

Reading comprehension involves not only generalization (as when identifying a main idea), but also careful attention to detail. This is an essential skill in daily life as well as in academic situations; it is important when reading an invitation, a recipe, a schedule, or a set of test directions. Misreading or forgetting a detail in any of these circumstances can have unfortunate, if not disastrous, consequences.

Specifics are details that answer questions beginning with words or phrases such as who, what, where, when, why, how, how much, how many, and which. A specific detail refers to information such as a name, a date, an object, a time, a location, an action, a quantity, or a characteristic.

When answering a question requesting a specific detail or step, it is crucial to read the question carefully after reading the selection. Remind your students that they need not rely on their memory to answer the question; if the passage is still available for reference, they should take advantage of that fact. Advise your students to reread both the question and the selection as many times as is necessary to be certain that they have found the right answer.

Some students will find it helpful to read the test item's question prior to reading the selection. In this way, much as one consults a reference source to locate specific information, when the appropriate detail is encountered, the reader will be more attentive to it.

Possible Instructional Activities

Question Quest

Distribute copies of one or two paragraphs containing several details. (Alternatively, you can use an overhead projector.) Select a passage that answers many possible questions. Newspaper and magazine articles (or summaries of articles) are good sources, or you can create your own passage. Ask students to suggest questions that might be asked about the passage, starting with these words and phrases: who, where, when, what, why, how, which, how much, and how many. Write several of the students' suggested questions on the board, then have other students answer the questions. If a wrong answer is offered, discuss why the student might have mistakenly chosen that answer. Emphasize the importance of reading both the question and the reading selection with great care and attention before deciding on an answer.

Culinary Consequences

Provide copies of recipes and use them to develop detail-spotting skills in your students. As the students look at the recipe, call out a question followed by a student's name (for example, "How many teaspoons of minced garlic should you add, Henry?") Try to keep the pace fast, and be sure to say a student's name after you ask the question so that no one knows who will be called upon to respond.

If you obtain an incorrect response, discuss what the culinary consequences might be if a cook had made that error while carrying out the recipe.

Following Instructions

The above activity can also be used with other sources, such as game instructions, mechanical directions, manuals that come with cameras, and directions to destinations.

Detail Delight

All the sources mentioned in the above activities may also be used for teacher-prepared sheets of reading passages followed by multiple-choice detail questions. Remind your students that, when they have the information before them, it is not difficult to find the right answer. Tell them to read the question carefully, then look for the correct answer in the passage and match it to one of the answer choices.

After your students have selected answers independently, you might want to go over the incorrect answer choices. Discuss why each is incorrect--for example, "This answer is in the passage, but it is not the answer to this question. Be sure you know what, precisely, the question is before you try to choose an answer."

Subject Sampling

Select, or ask students to bring, passages from textbooks used in other subjects. Working in groups, students should create details questions based on the passages, then, perhaps on the following day, present the passages and questions to the rest of the class via an overhead projector.

Sequence: Identify the sequence of events.

This objective requires the student to select a single step from a sequence of steps in order to identify what comes "first," "last," "immediately before," or "immediately after" a given event.

Sample Item

1704 Redlands Avenue
Lubbock, Texas 79415

August 20, 1984

Dear Sue,

I really had a terrific time at your place during vacation. I'll never forget our hilarious boating expedition on the Colorado River. I wish I had a photograph of your trying to retrieve your paddles as they drifted downstream. Although I forgot my camera, I still have plenty of fond memories.

Well, summer is almost over, but I'm looking forward to a good year at school. First period I have algebra. Second period is chemistry, and third is choir. Fourth period is English literature, followed by lunch. After lunch I have economics. My last class of the day is intermediate tennis. This year I'm on the tennis team and will be staying after school frequently for additional practice and tournaments. Sounds like a pretty strenuous schedule, doesn't it? I'll definitely have to make good use of my study time this semester!

Well, that's the most recent news. Thanks again for a delightful time!

See you soon,

Marie

According to this selection, what class does Marie have first?

A. algebra

B. chemistry

C. home economics

D. homeroom

Test Questions

1. Sequential-order items will consist of a reading selection that develops a topic through a sequence of four or more steps. Following the reading selection is a question that begins with the phrase, "According to this selection," and concerns a step described in the reading selection.

2. The question for a sequential-order item will require students to identify what comes first, last, immediately before, or immediately after a given event.

Answer Choices

1. The correct answer choice will be the step that is mentioned in the reading selection and is in the sequence that correctly answers the question.

2. The incorrect answer choices will be one of the following types:

   -- Incorrect Step: An accurate description of a step that is contained in the reading selection but does not answer the question. For example, an answer choice may consist of the second step in a sequence whereas the question asks for the first step.

   -- Imprecise Step: A step from the reading selection that has been changed.

   -- Irrelevant Step: A step that is not contained in the reading selection, even though it may appear to answer the question.

Answer Analysis for Sample Item

1. Answer choice A is correct because the second sentence of paragraph two states that algebra is Marie's first class of the day.

2. Answer choice B is an incorrect detail because it is the second, not the first, class of the day.

3. Answer choice C is an imprecise answer that restates an altered detail from the selection. Marie will be taking economics rather than home economics. Even if it was correctly restated, however, economics would not be the correct answer. Economics is the fifth, not the first, class of the day.

4. Answer choice D is an irrelevant answer because it consists of a class that is not even referred to by Marie. Homeroom is plausible as the first class of the day but represents an introduction of information not contained in the reading selection.

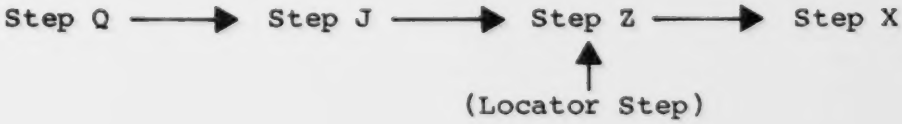
Instructional Emphases

Identifying sequence steps involves careful attention to words and phrases such as first, next, then, before (and immediately before), and after (and immediately after). These terms establish chronological relationships between steps as the steps are described.

You may wish to stress the only four sequence options that are eligible for use in this objective's test items, that is, first, last, immediately before, and immediately after. All four of these options will be used only in relation to a given event. Students will need to locate the "given event" before determining the step that comes, for example, "immediately after."

Some students find it helpful to lay out the entire series of steps in the sequence cited in the selection, then answer the sequence question. Clearly, for "first" or "last" questions, the student's task is to look for the initial or final step in the sequence.

For "immediately before" or "immediately after" questions, it is useful to consider the step given in the question as a locator step so that, once it is located, the task of determining what comes immediately before or after it will be simple. For example, if the test item calls for the student to indicate what comes immediately before Step Z, then the student can determine the order of the sequence as follows:



Having identified where the locator step falls in the sequence, it is easy to see that Step J comes immediately before Step Z.

As was true with the other detail objective, that is, specifics, some students find it useful to read the question prior to reading the selection.

Possible Instructional Activities

One Step at a Time

Provide copies of a paragraph describing a sequence of events. Have students read the passage to themselves. On the board, list vertically as many numbers as there are events described in the paragraph. Ask an advanced student to assist you by writing, at your direction, the passage's events on the board. Call on students to tell you which event occurs first, second, third, and so on until all of the events described in the paragraph are listed on the board.

Identify words and phrases indicating order and discuss how they help in determining the sequential relationships between steps.

Provide sheets for independent practice as necessary.

Question Quest, Culinary Consequences, Following Instructions, and Detail Delight can also be used with sequence passages. In this case, questions will contain phrases pertaining to sequential steps, such as first, last, just (immediately) before, and just (immediately) after.

Scrambled Sequences

Give students reading selections embodying clearly described sequences, then ask them to remove--one-at-a-time--the words or phrases which established the sequence. After several of these sequence-indicators have been deleted, show students how the sequence is no longer discernible. Then ask them to replace the missing words or phrases with different sequence-indicators so that the original nature of the sequence is established but with different words. Emphasize the critical role that such sequence-indicators play in determining order.

At the conclusion of the activity, pose practical questions for students similar to questions used in the TEAMS Exit Examination to measure this objective, for example, "According to this selection, what food did Juan eat last?"

Sequence-Indicators

Have students write a brief paragraph telling how to do something, such as how to check the oil in a car, or a paragraph giving directions, such as how to get to the school office from a classroom. Students should then write a sequence test-question to share with the class. As paragraphs and questions are shared, have students point out the sequence-indicators and explain how they help in determining the relationships between steps.

Comic-Strip Sequence

Choose 15 or so appropriately sequenced Sunday comic strips. Select only wording that uses sequence clues, for example, next, then, before, etc. Label each comic-strip "block" with a letter of the alphabet, but not in sequence. Cut out each block, laminate if possible, scramble, and place in an envelope to be ordered sequentially. Each envelope should be numbered to correspond with a number on the blocks, that is, 1a, 1b, 1c, etc., 2a, 2b, 2c, etc. Students record on an answer sheet their estimates of the appropriate sequence, reshuffle the blocks, then pass the envelopes to other students. At the end of the class, you should reveal the correct sequence to students.

SKILL AREA: INFERENCE

The skill area of inference includes two objectives, namely, conclusions and fact and opinion. The conclusions objective deals with the student's ability to draw conclusions from information presented in reading selections. The fact-and-opinion objective deals with the student's ability to distinguish between facts and opinions presented in reading selections.

Conclusions: Draw logical conclusions.

This objective requires the student to select a reasonable conclusion that can be drawn from information contained in the reading selection.

Sample Item

> Early this year the cable television industry began its first nationwide promotion campaign. The campaign is necessary because the number of people buying a subscription to cable television is starting to drop.
>
> Although many U.S. homes with television now take cable, the number of new subscribers is less than anticipated. This reduction in growth has been greatest in those cable television stations that offer mostly premium movies. It seems that cable television viewers do not subscribe just to see movies. According to a recent survey, viewers are most likely to subscribe to cable television stations that offer many different services. Home shopping and banking are some of the services that potential subscribers say they would like to see offered.

Which of the following conclusions can most reasonably be drawn from this selection?

A. The nationwide campaign to promote cable television subscriptions should emphasize services such as home shopping.

B. A cable television station that offers home shopping services will get more subscribers than one which offers home banking services.

C. If the showing of premium movies was promoted, then more people would subscribe to cable television.

D. More people prefer to watch movies at home than at theatres.

Test Questions

1. Conclusion items will consist of a reading selection followed by the question, "Which of the following conclusions can most reasonably be drawn from this selection?"

2. To draw the required conclusion, it will be necessary to do one of the following:

   a. determine cause or effect

   b. arrive at a generalization from a series of details

   c. predict outcomes

   d. make comparisons

   e. evaluate or make judgments

   f. draw other logical conclusions based on information presented in the selection

Answer Choices

1. The correct answer choice will be the most reasonable conclusion (of the four answer choices) that can be reached from information provided in the selection. This conclusion will be accurate, relevant, and supported by information in the selection.

2. The incorrect answer choices will be plausible but incorrect conclusions that will be one of the following types:

   -- Contradicted: A statement that is contradicted by information in the reading selection.

   -- Unsupported: A statement for which insufficient evidence is presented in the selection to support the statement.

-- Irrelevant: A statement for which no evidence is presented in the reading selection to support the statement. This conclusion typically introduces information not included in the reading selection. Although irrelevant, this type of answer choice must include at least one concept that is contained in the reading selection.

Answer Analysis for Sample Item

1. Answer choice A is a correct conclusion based on the reading selection. The stated purpose of the nationwide promotion campaign is to increase the number of new subscribers (paragraph one: sentences one and two). The selection implies that the number of new subscribers has dropped because potential subscribers are not being offered the services they want from cable television (paragraph two: sentences two, three, and four). Home shopping and banking are then described as two services potential subscribers want (paragraph two: last sentence). In summation:

   a. Cable TV stations have begun a campaign to get more subscribers.

   b. Viewers want home shopping and home banking services from cable television.

   c. Therefore, the promotion campaign should emphasize such services as home shopping and home banking.

2. Answer choice B is an unsupported conclusion. Home banking and home shopping are both characterized as services potential subscribers want. Neither service, however, is put forward as the better idea of the two. There is no basis to prove or disprove the conclusion represented in this answer choice.

3. Answer choice C is contradicted by the second sentence of paragraph two. Those stations that show mostly premium movies have suffered the greatest drop of new subscribers. The promotion of the service that is growing less popular would not lead to an increase in new subscribers.

4. Answer choice D is irrelevant because the viewing of movies in theaters is not described in the selection.

Instructional Emphases

In order to become responsible adults, students need to develop an ability to make decisions based on available information. A capacity for drawing logical conclusions involves various inference skills. These include determining cause-and-effect relationships, arriving at a generalization from a series of details, predicting outcomes, making comparisons, and forming evaluations, or judgments--all important aspects of critical thinking.

The TEAMS conclusions items contain, in each item's reading selection, all of the requisite information needed for the examinee to arrive at the conclusion presented as one of the answer choices.

You will doubtlessly wish to stress this distinctive feature of TEAMS conclusions items so that your students truly recognize the necessary information for drawing a reasonable conclusion is there in front of them. It is their job to read the selection carefully and analyze what they read with great care to ferret out a defensible conclusion.

Each of the six categories of permissible conclusions or inferences for the TEAMS Exit Level Test conclusions items will now be treated in brief detail.

Cause and Effect

A is the cause of B; B is the effect of A.

Cause and effect relationships are sometimes indicated by transitional words and phrases such as because, so, therefore, consequently, in order that, as a result, and, in some of their uses, then, thus, since, and for. In the following pair of sentences, such transitional words establish a clear cause-and-effect connection between two actions.

> I missed my train because I arrived 10 minutes late.
>
> As a result of arriving 10 minutes late, I missed my train.

A causal relationship can often be discerned, however, without the help of such terms.

> I arrived 10 minutes late. I missed my train.

In this case, the cause-and-effect connection between the two events can be inferred, or surmised, by the juxtaposition of the statements and the logical relationship between the events described. (As indicated earlier, however, this sort of cause-and-effect relationship would not be used in TEAMS items because it would depend too heavily on the examinee's prior experiences with trains and the consequence of a late arrival.)

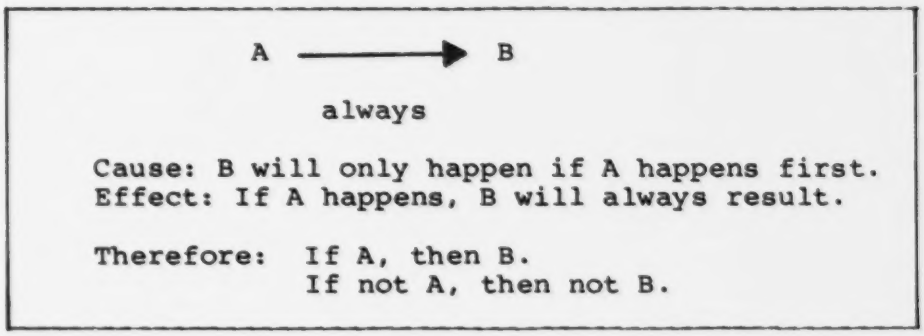
Arriving at Generalizations

A series of related details can be viewed together as a whole to form a generalization.

Details	Generalization
John never tells lies. John always pays his debts. John is loyal to his friends.	John is responsible.

Predicting Outcomes

The prediction of outcomes is related to an understanding of cause and effect. If we know that Event A invariably brings about the occurrence of Event B, and Event A happens, then we can reasonably predict that Event B will occur.


A
B
always
Cause: B will only happen if A happens first.
Effect: If A happens, B will always result.
Therefore: If A, then B.
If not A, then not B.

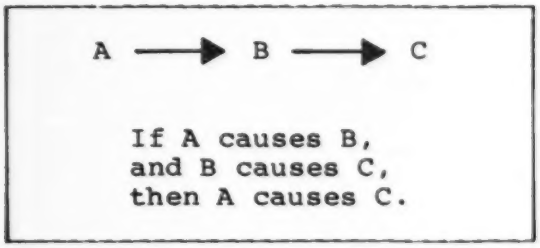
Example: When it rains, Carlos takes the bus to school.
It is raining today.

Conclusion: Carlos will take the bus to school today.

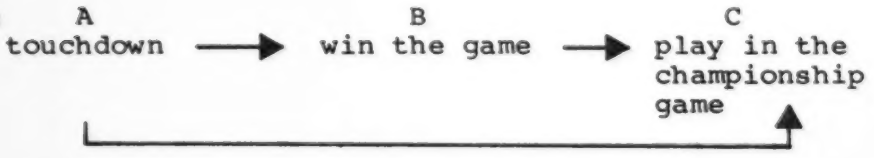
Example: The houseplant will only survive if someone waters it daily. The houseplant is alive and thriving.

Conclusion: Somebody has been watering the houseplant.

Also, by extension, if A is known to cause B, and B is known to cause C, then A will bring about the occurrence of C.



Example:



If the football team scores a touchdown, they will win the game. If they win the game, they will play in the championship game.

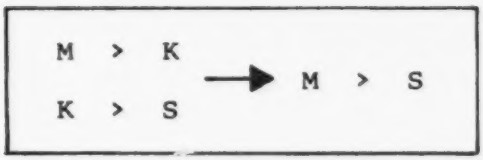
Conclusion: If the football teams scores a touchdown, they will play in the championship game.

Making Comparisons

Perceiving similarities and differences between or among described entities is an important reading skill. Sometimes degrees of resemblance or contrast between two entities is not directly stated; the link must then be inferred.

Example: Mark is taller than Karin. Karin is taller than Scott.

Conclusion: Mark is taller than Scott.



Evaluating and Making Judgments

Evaluation is a high-level, critical-thinking skill that involves forming an opinion or judgment concerning the value or significance of something. It can also involve determining the positive and negative aspects of competing possibilities and selecting the best option. The choice of an option depends on the criteria that are employed in judging the options.

Example: Susie is shopping for a new sweater. She is looking for a sweater that is machine washable and that she can wear with her new skirt. The first sweater that she tried matched her skirt perfectly and fit well. Because it is hand-knit, it cannot be washed by machine. The second sweater that Susie tried looked okay with her skirt and was machine washable. The third sweater she tried on was machine washable but did not quite match the color of her skirt.

Conclusion: Susie should buy the second sweater.

Logical Deductions

Making a logical deduction based on syllogistic reasoning is represented in these two logic diagrams:

All A are B X is an A Therefore, X is a B	or	No A are B X is an A Therefore, X is not a B

Examples: All students at Huckaby High School have 35 minutes for lunch. Derek attends Huckaby High.

Conclusion: Derek has 35 minutes for lunch.

None of Isabel's cats is black.
Mishu is a black cat.

Conclusion: Mishu does not belong to Isabel.

In the TEAMS conclusions items, making logical deductions covers any type of conclusion other than those previously described (for instance, making comparisons). In the examples given here the conclusion involves the process of classification. There are, however, other sorts of logical processes that are used to make logical deductions. In the TEAMS conclusions items there are five relatively distinctive types of logical processes used to draw conclusions and one (making logical deductions) used to represent all other conclusions.

Possible Instructional Activities

Ad Scanning

Distribute copies of a section of a newspaper's classified ads. Provide criteria for an item that students are to select, such as a used car. Possible criteria include less than five years old, driven less than 60,000 miles, blue or green color, two-door, costs no more than $3,000. Have students skim through the ads and find the car that best fits those criteria. Other ad sections can be included, and students can look for objects such as furniture, musical instruments, pets, and houses.

Causes and Effects

Provide a series of statements in two columns. List the causes in the first column and list the effects of these causes in the second column in a mixed order. For example:

Causes	Effects
There was a rainstorm last night.	I awoke late and missed my bus.
George forgot to put gas in his car.	The air was fresh this morning.
I didn't set my alarm.	He was stranded on the highway.

Tell your students to be sure to pick the most direct cause-and-effect relationships. Although many of the above events

could, in some way, be related (It is conceivable that a rainstorm could indirectly cause someone to be stranded on a highway or to awaken late and miss the bus.), these connections are not all of a causal nature.

Generally Speaking

Ask each student to bring to class an article describing a person, a place, or an event. Each student is to write a list of five details that support a general impression about the person, place, or event described in the article. For example, if the event is a fair, the particulars listed might include any of the following:

1. Thousands of people attended the fair.
2. The weather was bright and sunny, but not too hot.
3. There were no mishaps or problems.
4. All the booths brought in a good profit.
5. Everyone at the fair seemed to have a wonderful time.

From these details the students are to create a general statement about the person, place, or event they have described. With the above list, for example, the general statement might be, "The fair was a success."

Before you collect students' papers, have a few volunteers read their lists of facts and their generalizations. You and the rest of the class can appraise the quality of the generalizations.

Predictable Occupations

This activity provides practice in predicting logical outcomes and encourages students to think about possible career options. Provide descriptions of several teenagers. Each description should contain information regarding the young person's interests, talents, hobbies--anything that might indicate what the person's future occupation might be. Next, describe key characteristics needed for success in five or six occupations. Then ask the class to respond to the following question: "For which occupation is each student best suited to enter?"

Discuss the students' answers. You may also want to open the discussion to other possible career options for the individuals described as well as for types of individuals not described in the activity.

Drawing Conclusions

Select and distribute copies of short magazine or newspaper articles whose final paragraphs have been omitted. Have students read the articles and write one or two sentences reflecting what they think the ending might be. Call on a student to read aloud a possible ending and defend it with evidence from the article.

Let's Be Logical

Provide copies of the various logic diagrams presented in Instructional Emphases. Have students work independently at creating three examples of each type of diagram. Then, one at a time, draw each diagram on the board and obtain a few examples for each.

Build an Implication

With the assistance of the class create a brief passage on the chalkboard which permits the drawings of one of the six types of inferential conclusions permissible for assessing this TEAMS objective. Be sure to incorporate all of the necessary information in the passage. Discuss with the students the ingredients on which the inference is based.

Fact and Opinion: Distinguish between fact and opinion.

This objective requires the student to distinguish between facts and opinions by correctly identifying a fact or an opinion stated in a reading selection from answer choices based on the reading selection.

Sample Item

> At one time or another most people have waited until the last minute to finish something they've had enough time to do. That's called procrastination. Procrastination, or constantly putting things off, is one way to deal with pressure. It's not the best way, but it is a method used by many people.
>
> Many teenagers say that they procrastinate because they can get away with finishing homework or chores in minimal time. If nothing really bad happens, procrastination continues.
>
> In a recent survey people were asked to indicate why they procrastinated. Most of the people responding indicated one of three reasons--fear of failure, fear of success, or rebellion. The myth that people who procrastinate are lazy, disorganized, or simply don't care about their work is not true. However, people who procrastinate should try to identify why they continually put things off. That is the key to eliminating this behavior.

Which of the following is a FACT presented in the selection?

A. Many teenagers say that they procrastinate because they have too much homework.

B. Procrastination is not the best way to deal with pressure.

C. Some people reported using procrastination because they feared they would fail.

D. Putting things off until the last minute may create stress and anxiety.

Test Questions

1. A test item will consist of a reading selection followed by the question, "Which of the following statements is a FACT presented in the selection?" or "Which of the following is an OPINION presented in the selection?"

Answer Choices

1. For items requiring identification of a fact:

   a. The correct answer choice will be a fact stated in the reading selection.

   b. The incorrect answer choices will be one of the following types:

      -- Contradicted Fact: A statement presented as a fact, but contradicted by information in the selection.

      -- Irrelevant Fact: A statement presented as a fact that introduces information not included in the reading selection. Although irrelevant, this type of answer choice must include at least one concept that is contained in the reading selection.

      -- Opinion: A judgment or belief that contains at least one concept from the reading selection.

2. For items requiring identification of an opinion:

   a. The correct answer will correctly restate or paraphrase an opinion from the reading selection.

   b. The incorrect answer choices will be one of the following types:

      -- Contradicted Opinion: A statement of opinion that is contradicted by information in the reading selection.

-- Irrelevant Opinion: A statement of opinion that introduces information not included in the selection. Although irrelevant, this type of answer choice must include at least one concept that is contained in the reading selection.

-- Fact: A statement from or related to the reading selection that is a fact rather than a view or belief.

Answer Analysis for Sample Item

1. Answer choice A is a contradicted fact because in the second paragraph it is asserted that teenagers feel they can finish their homework in a minimal amount of time.

2. Answer choice B is an opinion (not a fact) that is presented in the last sentence of the first paragraph. However sensible, this belief cannot be conclusively proven or disproven.

3. Answer choice C is correct. This statement paraphrases concrete information from the second sentence of the third paragraph. Fear of failure is listed as one of three reasons cited by people who were asked to indicate why they procrastinate.

4. Answer choice D is an irrelevant fact because the effects of procrastination, such as stress and anxiety, are not dealt with in the selection. The selection more narrowly concerns itself with the causes of procrastination.

Instructional Emphases

The development of critical thinking skills is an educational goal whose realization is at once essential and elusive. An integral part of critical thinking is the ability to distinguish between statements of fact and of opinion. This capacity is necessary if students are to be expected to form their own logical, well-reasoned opinions concerning the many issues facing them in today's complex world. Bombarded by data from many sources, students must be shown how to discern facts from opinions in order to arrive at their own rational conclusions. Far too many students believe that if it's on television or in print, it's true!

A fact is a piece of information that is known to be true. Because facts can be proven, they have objective reality. Facts are supported by evidence gathered through direct observation or measurement.

An opinion is a statement that expresses a belief, a value judgment, or a prediction. Although opinions are often stated as fact, they rely on the acceptance of an idea that cannot be proven. The use of certain words may indicate that a statement is an opinion. The words "must," "can," "should," and "may" suggest the expression of a belief or expectation. "Generally," "frequently," "often," and "usually" suggest that the idea expressed may not always be true. Adjectives such as "important," "beautiful," "necessary," "best," "good," and "bad" indicate personal judgments. A prediction may be indicated by words such as "will," "shall," "probably," "possibly," and "likely." You may want to alert your students that these "clue words," if they are present in a selection, can help one identify statements of opinion.

Because clue words are often not present in a reading selection, emphasize the importance of the possibility of objective verification of a factual statement, something not possible with an opinion.

Readers often mistake an opinion for a fact when it is an opinion that they happen to agree with or when it is stated in a very definite way. Emphasize to your students that terms like "definitely," "absolutely," and "positively" do not make a statement a fact. Also, an opinion with which a reader agrees, no matter how strongly, is nevertheless an opinion.

A particularly important aspect of the TEAMS fact-and-opinion items is the way that the test item's question is phrased. Note the stressed portion of that question: "Which of the following is a FACT presented in the selection?" Your students must be sensitized to the idea that the facts or opinions they seek will be included in the selection. Thus, if the student is told to identify an opinion in the selection, not any opinion will do. Indeed, students must be certain that the fact (or opinion) they are considering is present in the selection.

Possible Instructional Activities

Masquerade

Provide a list of sentences that includes fact statements and opinions "masquerading" as facts. Here are some examples.

The Scarlet Letter is an interesting novel.
(opinion--clue word: interesting)

Daniel Defoe wrote Robinson Crusoe.
(fact)

Jane will probably be here by 5:00.
(opinion--clue words: will probably)

Mark was the first to arrive at the party.
(fact)

Texas is definitely the best state in the country.
(opinion--clue words: definitely, best)

Have students work independently, underlining clue words and labeling each sentence as fact or opinion. Go over each statement and discuss what makes it a fact or an opinion. Try to have students think of facts or opinions that are identifiable without clue words, for it is possible that, in a given TEAMS test item, no clue words will be present.

Assertions

Ask students to write 10 sentences, five under the heading "I Know (FACTS)" and five under the heading "I Think (OPINIONS)." Allow several minutes for independent work as they generate their assertions.

Call on several students for examples of facts, encouraging other students to raise their hands if they can demonstrate that a statement is actually an opinion. As you obtain clear examples of fact statements, write them on one side of the board under "I Know (FACTS)."

When you have obtained five fact statements, ask for opinion statements. Under "I Think (OPINIONS)," write these on the board until you have five opinion statements.

Paraphrasing Facts and Opinions

Answer choices in fact-and-opinion items are either restatements or paraphrases of information presented in the selection. Thus, students must be able to identify paraphrased information in order to discriminate among answer choices. The focus of this activity is recognizing paraphrased facts and opinions.

Have the class read a brief selection that contains both fact and opinion statements. Ask for a student to suggest a statement of fact from the selection. Write the sentence on the board. Ask how the idea expressed in the sentence can be stated in another way. Write on the board two or

three acceptable paraphrases of the original statement. Show how a sentence can be paraphrased by rearranging the word order or by substituting different words having the same meaning. Repeat this procedure with additional fact, then opinion, statements provided by students.

To provide further practice in paraphrasing, have all students read the same selection. Call on a student to give a paraphrase of one sentence in the selection. Ask the rest of the class if they can identify the sentence that was paraphrased and label the statement as a fact or an opinion.

Proving a Point

Provide copies of an article, editorial, or advertisement that uses facts to back up an opinion. Have students list the facts and the opinions they find in the selection. Discuss how the facts are used in an attempt to prove that a certain opinion is "right." Decide what an opposing opinion might be and what kinds of facts might be used to support this contrary point of view.

As a homework assignment, you might have each student select a similar passage and go through the above process in written form, to be handed in with the passage.

Book Blurbs

Have students choose a paperback book with information and promotional copy on the front and back cover. Students should then determine which statements are fact ("has sold over 200,000 copies") and which are opinion ("the most refreshing new author in 30 years"). Discuss how the facts might be proven and why they are included. Then discuss how the opinions could not be proven, but why they are included. Students can then design their own book jackets using both fact-and-opinion statements. The books they refer to may be real or imaginary.

Facts and Opinions in the News

Have students study newspapers to determine which sections are most likely to contain contents that are dominantly factual versus those dominantly opinion-oriented.

Find the Fact

Select a short article from a textbook, magazine, or newspaper, and give the students a multiple-choice question. The question requires the student to identify a fact that was presented in the article. The three distractors should include one factual statement which is irrelevant to the article, one factual statement which is contradictory to the information presented in the article, and one opinion statement. Discuss the correct answer and incorrect answers with students after they have attempted to answer the question.

Find the Opinion

Prepare a set of multiple-choice questions regarding a magazine article or newspaper editorial that students are to read. The questions ask students to identify an opinion supported by the selection. The distractors should include: an opinion statement which contradicts what is in the selection, an opinion statement which contains one concept from the article but which is irrelevant to the selection in that it contains information not mentioned in the article, and one factual statement which contains at least one concept from the selection.

SKILL AREA: REFERENCE USAGE

The skill area of reference usage includes two objectives, namely, selecting reference sources and using reference sources. For the objective dealing with selecting reference sources, the student is required to choose an appropriate reference tool to locate requested information. For the objective dealing with using reference sources, the student must employ an excerpt from a reference source to answer a question.

The reference sources eligible for test questions in the objectives comprising this skill area are the following:

- a table or chart
- a map
- a diagram
- a schedule
- a graph
- a dictionary
- an encyclopedia
- an almanac
- a thesaurus
- a telephone directory (white or yellow pages)
- a newspaper
- the Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature
- an atlas
- a table of contents
- an index

Selecting Reference Sources: Identify the appropriate reference sources.

This objective requires the student to select an appropriate reference source in response to a test question that asks where to look for certain information.

Sample Item

Where should you look to find the pages about Thomas Edison in a history book?

A. an encyclopedia

B. the index

C. an atlas

D. a thesaurus

Test Questions

1. A test item will contain a one-sentence question that asks where a particular type of information can be found.

Answer Choices

1. The correct answer choice will be the name of the reference source that provides the type of information requested in the question.

2. The incorrect answer choices will be reference sources from the reference-source list that generally do not provide the type of information requested by the question.

Answer Analysis for Sample Item

1. Answer choice A is incorrect. An encyclopedia is an alphabetized, usually multi-volume, reference containing information on persons, places, and things.

2. Answer choice B is correct. An index, which follows the main text of a publication, is an alphabetized list of the content that is contained within the body of a written work (usually a person, place, or thing). An item listed in the index is followed by the page numbers on which the item is mentioned. If Thomas Edison is mentioned in a history book, his name would be listed in the index, typically as "Edison, Thomas."

3. Answer choice C is incorrect because an atlas is a book of maps.

4. Answer choice D is incorrect because a thesaurus is a reference tool containing lists of synonyms for words.

Instructional Emphases

Locating a piece of needed information requires knowing which reference source to consult. Students need to know when to use a thesaurus rather than a dictionary, when it is more useful to refer to a book's index than its table of contents, and in which cases an almanac will prove more helpful than an encyclopedia. You can reinforce these distinctions by encouraging your students to familiarize themselves with the special purposes of each of the 15 eligible reference sources. It will be helpful to have one or more examples of each reference source to demonstrate to your students. With practice students will feel comfortable

about knowing which reference tool to turn to when in search of a specific kind of information.

Possible Instructional Activities

Source Search

Divide your students into eight groups. Each group is to be assigned one of the following reference sources: (1) dictionary, (2) encyclopedia, (3) almanac, (4) thesaurus, (5) telephone directory, (6) newspaper, (7) Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature, and (8) atlas. During a library period, each group is to research its assigned reference source. By the end of the session, students are to have obtained answers to the following questions (as they apply):

1. How many (almanacs, kinds of dictionaries, sets of encyclopedias, telephone directories, etc.) does the library have? List the name of each.

2. How is the reference source organized? List and describe the source's sections in the same order in which they appear in the source.

3. What kinds of information does the source contain? In what situations might the source be useful?

4. How is the source used, that is, how do you use it to locate desired information?

Each group should orally present their findings to the class during a subsequent class session. Other students are to take notes and keep them for future reference.

Source Search Quiz

Devise a set of 10 or 15 questions, all of which begin with the phrase, "Where would you look to find ...?" Students are to answer the questions based on their knowledge of the eight reference sources that were presented in the oral reports.

Match and Mix

Have students prepare two sets of index cards. Each card on one set (the Name Set) should contain the name of each of the 15 reference sources eligible for this TEAMS objective. Each card in the second set (the Function Set)

should contain the function of each reference source written in the student's own words.

Direct students to organize themselves in small groups (three to five students per group), then simultaneously exchange at random their Function Sets. The two winners in each group are (1) the student who can first correctly match the cards in the two sets and (2) the student whose function cards were used by the winner.

Using Reference Sources: Use reference sources to locate information.

This objective requires the student to use an excerpt from a reference source in an appropriate manner in order to find information that answers a question presented in the test item.

Sample Item

Excerpt from a dictionary:

dirty ('dərt-ē) adj. 1. not clean or pure. 2. likely to be foul or soiled with dirt. 3. tedious, disagreeable, thankless. 4. contaminated with infecting organisms. 5. base, wretched. 6. unsportsmanlike. 7. highly regrettable. 8. indecent. 9. foggy, stormy. 10. dull.

Even after washing his sports car, Tim found that the car's formerly bright red paint had faded to a dirty red.

What is the best meaning of the word dirty in the sentence above?

A. definition 1

B. definition 4

C. definition 9

D. definition 10

Test Questions

1. A test item will begin with a display that is an excerpt from a reference source. The display will be followed by a question asking students to locate a specific piece of information using the display.

2. The question will require students to use the display in the same way that the reference source from which the display is drawn is typically used. The question will specify the nature of the information to be located in the display and will include all the data necessary for locating that information.

3. The use of mathematical operations will not be required to answer the question.

Answer Choices

1. The correct answer choice will consist of the piece of information from the display that accurately answers the test question.

2. The incorrect answer choices will be one of the following types:

   -- Adjacent Information: Information from the display that is located next to the requested information.

   -- Similar Information: Information from the display that is similar in meaning or appearance to the requested information.

   -- Incorrect Information: Information from the display that does not answer the question.

Answer Analysis for Sample Item

1. Answer choice A (definition 1) is similar in meaning to the correct answer because something that is not clean could appear dull. The paint on Tim's car, however, remains dull "Even after washing." Cleanliness is not the problem.

2. Answer choice B (definition 4) is incorrect because infecting organisms have nothing to do with the paint on Tim's car.

3. Answer choice C (definition 9) is adjacent to the correct answer. Students sometimes make the mistake of selecting information just before or just after the correct information.

4. Answer choice D (definition 10) is correct. Dull appropriately describes the car's red paint after fading. The structure of the sentence also points to the definition because the word dirty represents a direct contrast to the word bright.

Instructional Emphases

Once the appropriate reference source has been selected, students need to know how to use it effectively to find the desired information. This involves skills such as alphabetizing, reading rows and columns in tables and graphs, and interpreting information presented in keys and legends for reading maps and diagrams.

There are 15 reference sources eligible for use in the test items for this TEAMS objective. Some of those reference sources will doubtlessly be well understood by your students already. Others will not. You will need to provide an explanation about, and practice in the use of, each of the reference sources cited. Some, for example, a table of contents, will take little time. Others, for instance, a thesaurus, will require a substantial amount of explanation and practice.

If possible, a varied versions of each reference source should be made available to students so that they can see there are different forms of an atlas, a thesaurus, charts, etc.

With guidance and ample opportunities for practice, students can become proficient at their researching skills.

Possible Instructional Activities

Data Displays

Ask students to assemble a variety of reference sources that they have clipped from magazines and newspapers. These materials are to include at least one of each of the following: (1) table of contents; (2) index (some magazines have an index, but this may also be copied from a book); (3) table or chart; (4) map; (5) diagram; (6) schedule; and (7) graph. Below each sample the student should write a brief explanation of the kinds of information shown. Each sample should be clearly labeled so that you can ascertain that students know the differences among the various types of informational displays. Then ask students to create one question for each reference source so that the source plus the question can be exchanged with other students. If time permits, discuss illustrative sources, questions, and answers with the entire class. Focus in particular on materials that are intrinsically interesting such as comparison of various automobiles' gasoline mileages.

Fact Finding

Select excerpts from reference materials, such as graphs, sections of an index, portions of a table of contents, tables or charts, and pages from an almanac. Write questions asking students to locate specific pieces of information from the excerpts. Example: "According to this graph, how many women graduated from college in the U.S. in 1947?" Provide copies of the excerpts and the questions for the students. Review answers and/or collect sheets for grading.

Scavenger Hunt

Divide the class into groups of two or three students. Have each group write a list of 10 questions, each of which can be answered by referring to a reference source in the classroom. (This can also take place in the library, but you will need to schedule two sessions there--one for question-writing and one for answer-finding.) On a separate piece of paper, have each group write the answers and the sources where the requested pieces of information can be found. Collect and review both sheets.

On another day distribute each set of questions (keeping the response-and-source sheet) to other groups. Each group must answer the 10 questions they have been given. Students should also write down where they located the information.

The team who first finds the answers to all 10 of their questions wins the contest. (Polaroid cameras can come in handy in these situations. Take a photograph of the winning team and post it under a title such as "Research Wizards" or "Star Scavengers.")

SKILL AREA: ANALYSIS OF LITERATURE

Analysis of Literature: Analyze literary selections.

This objective requires the student to choose a correct analysis of a literary element (such as plot or theme) identified in a test question.

Sample Item

> There was no sound but the muffled throb of the engine as the boat moved swiftly through the darkness. Reclining in a steamer chair, Garrett puffed on his favorite pipe.
>
> Suddenly, an abrupt sound startled him. Somewhere off in the blackness three gunshots had been fired. Mystified, he sprang up and moved quickly to the rail. He strained his eyes, but it was like trying to see through a blanket. He leaped onto the rail in an effort to see farther over the ocean waves. His pipe, striking a rope, was knocked from his mouth. He reached quickly for it. A hoarse cry came from his lips as he realized he had reached too far and lost his balance. The cry was pinched off short as the ocean water closed over his head. Struggling to the surface, Garrett tried to cry for help. Desperately he began to swim after the speeding boat. Any chance that his cries for help would be heard were erased as the boat disappeared into the night.

What is the best description of the plot of this selection?

A. The action takes place on a dark, quiet night on the ocean.

B. A man on a boat hears gunshots.

C. Investigating gunshots, a man falls from a boat and is left stranded in the ocean.

D. A passenger on a boat is hit by bullets and falls overboard.

Test Questions

1. A test item will consist of a reading selection followed by a question that asks about a structural element in the selection.

2. The selection will include sufficient supporting information to permit an analysis of one of the following structural elements:

   a. Plot: The series of events that make up the story line of a literary selection.

   b. Setting: The time and/or place in which a narrative or drama is enacted. The context in which a literary selection takes place.

   c. Character: A person portrayed in a literary selection, including a description of personality traits, features, or abilities.

   d. Theme: The underlying idea expressed by a literary selection. The meaning of a story, poem, or play.

   e. Tone: The attitude expressed by the speaker or writer of a literary selection established in part by the choice of words and phrasing.

   f. Mood: The pervading impression, feeling, or emotion created in a literary selection.

   g. Point of View: The perspective from which a story is told.

3. A test question about point of view will ask, "Who is the narrator of the selection above?" Otherwise, a test question will ask for the best description of a specified structural element.

Answer Choices

1. The correct answer will be the word, phrase, or sentence that accurately describes the reading selection's embodiment of the structural element asked for by the question. The correct answer choice for a point-of-view question will correctly identify the narrator of the reading selection.

2. Incorrect answer choices will be one of the following types:

   -- Contradicted Analysis: An analysis that is clearly inconsistent with or contradicts information presented in the selection.

   -- Incomplete Analysis: An analysis that does not account for all or enough of the relevant information in the selection.

   -- Incorrect Element: An analysis, accurate or otherwise, of a structural element other than the one asked for by the question. In other words, the answer choice may describe the plot whereas the question asks for the theme. Because they are too closely related, mood and tone will not be used as incorrect answer choices for each other.

Answer Analysis for Sample Item

1. Answer choice A is an incorrect element because the setting is described instead of the plot. This sentence accurately describes the place and time in which the narrative takes place rather than what actually happens in the selection.

2. Answer choice B is an incomplete analysis of the plot because it only describes a part of what happens in the selection.

3. Answer choice C is correct because it is a comprehensive account of the important events that take place in the selection.

4. Answer choice D is a contradicted analysis of the plot. The man on the boat is not shot. He falls into the ocean when he slips off the boat rail.

Instructional Emphases

This TEAMS objective deals with literary analysis in a clearly defined and teachable manner. Rather than expecting students to be able to answer any sort of abstruse question about a literary selection, the nature of eligible questions is set forth. You can prepare your students to master this TEAMS objective by helping them become thoroughly familiar with the seven literary elements around which the objective is organized. If students can distinguish the differences among these seven elements, for example by being able to

define them or recognize instances of them, they will be able to perform satisfactorily on TEAMS literary analysis items. More importantly, perhaps, your students will have acquired tools that can help them attain the profound pleasures associated with the reading of literature.

The seven components of literary analysis dealt with in the TEAMS Exit Level Test are plot, setting, character, theme, tone, mood, and point of view. These structural elements are briefly described below.

Plot. A plot is a sequence of related events that make up the story line of a literary work. The plot usually involves the resolution of some conflict or problem. The events typically follow the following pattern: the conflict or problem is established; complications arise from the conflict; a main character takes decisive action or the situation itself brings about a climax; and, finally, the conflict is resolved. An example of a plot statement is, "Anna Monroe receives a mysterious letter from an old friend and goes to visit him, only to find that he had disappeared three weeks before she received the letter."

Setting. The setting is the time and place, or context, in which the events of a narrative or drama occur. It may be directly described by the narrator or by one of the characters, or it may be suggested through dialogue and action.

Character. A character is a person portrayed in a literary selection. An author may describe characters directly or reveal them through their actions, speech, and thoughts, as well as through the reactions of others.

Theme. The theme of a story, poem, or play is the idea or message underlying the story being told. It can be a moral lesson, an impression, or a philosophical view. A theme may be directly stated, but more often it is implied. Not every literary work has a theme. Examples of theme statements are: "People who are greedy often find themselves left alone by other people" (moral lesson); "Life was hard for the pioneers who traveled west to build a new life" (impression); "The best way to live your life is to be open to new people and new experiences" (philosophical view).

Tone. The tone is the author's attitude, stated or implied, toward a subject. Tone may be revealed through choice of words and through phrasing (sentence length, punctuation). Tone can be thought of as the tone of voice in which the author seems to be speaking. Examples of words used to describe tone are serious, bitter, humorous, sympathetic, joyous, mocking, cynical, whimsical, and ironic.

Mood. Mood is the pervading impression, feeling, or emotion created in a literary selection. The author's choice of setting, objects, details, images, and words all contribute in creating a specific mood. Mood, the feeling created in a selection, should not be confused with tone, the author's attitude in a selection.

Point of View. The point of view is the perspective from which a story is told, or the narrator of the story. The narrator may be a character in the story or an outsider who is observing the action.

Possible Instructional Activities

Tune in to Tone

Have students read letters to the editor in the newspaper and bring them to class. They are to determine the tone of each letter. Write the following on the board:

1. negative and critical
2. positive and complimentary
3. optimistic
4. pessimistic
5. frustrated

Ask the students if any of their letters fit into these or other tone descriptions. Have students read orally parts of their letters that demonstrate these attitudes, or tones.

The Moral of the Story

A moral is one of the easier types of theme to discern in a story. Choose five or six of Aesop's fables and make copies of these for students to read. Have students read the fables and answer multiple-choice questions for each. The questions should read: "What is the best description of the theme in this fable?" The choices should include the correct response, a response that contradicts the true theme, a response that is incomplete, and a response that is incorrect. (This could be a description of setting, plot, characterization or point of view.)

This activity can also be used with other short works of literature having morals and other kinds of themes (philosophical views and life impressions).

In the Mood

Have each student find a short passage, in a literature textbook or novel, that evokes a certain emotion, such as sorrow, fear, or contentment. Call on a student to read a paragraph aloud. After the reading, discuss the mood of the selection and see whether other students agree with the reader's choice of feeling for the passage.

The Magnificent Seven

Have students read a short story, poem, or play, then hand out copies of the following questions. After students have worked on their responses independently, discuss possible answers. Review the seven structural elements of literature associated with the seven questions.

1. The reader sees the action through the eyes of ____. (point of view)

2. What happens in this selection? (plot)

3. Where and when does the action take place? (setting)

4. The character [name] in this story can best be described as _____. (character)

5. The feeling created in this selection is one of _____. (mood)

6. The author's attitude toward the subject of this selection is _____. (tone)

7. The underlying idea of this story is _____. (theme)

Bio Briefs

Have students read short biographical sketches and write adjectives that describe the person, as well as adjectives that do not accurately describe the person. Direct students to exchange materials, read the selection, and select the best description from the choices. Note that this activity requires students to base their selection of the best answer on the description in the selection, not on their prior knowledge of famous persons (for example, Abraham Lincoln as honest).

TEAMS ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS OBJECTIVES

WRITING: EXIT LEVEL

The TEAMS exit-level writing objectives are measured by multiple-choice items that generally present a brief communication followed by a multiple-choice question based on the communication. The test items' communications represent the types of writing that students may do in school, at home, or in their community, for example, friendly or business letters as well as narrative, descriptive, or expository essays. The objectives tested in this part of the TEAMS exit-level examination according to skill area are:

- Mechanics
  - Capitalization
  - Punctuation
  - Spelling
- English Usage
- Sentence Formation
  - Sentence Completion
  - Sentence Combination
- Proofreading
- Organization

All parts of communications used in the TEAMS Exit Examination writing items will be identified by bracketed numbers, for example, [3]. The identified parts include each sentence and, in letters, the salutation, closing, and writer's name.

Each test item contains four answer choices, only one of which will be correct.

SKILL AREA: MECHANICS

The skill area of mechanics includes three objectives, namely, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling. For test items measuring capitalization and punctuation, the student will be presented with a brief communication, then asked to detect errors in capitalization or punctuation. For test items measuring spelling, the student will be presented with three words, one of which may be misspelled, then asked to select the spelling error or to indicate that no spelling error is present.

Capitalization: Demonstrate knowledge of standard uses of capitalization.

This objective requires the student to identify whether there is a capitalization error within one of the specified parts of a brief communication.

Sample Item

> [1] Dear Aunt Millie,
>
> [2] Thank you for the plane ticket to omaha, Nebraska. [3] It arrived in the mail yesterday. [4] I can't wait to see you and Uncle Emry. [5] We are going to have so much fun.
>
> [6] Sincerely,
>
> [7] Thurston

In which part of this communication, if any, is there an error in capitalization?

A. Part [1]

B. Part [2]

C. Part [5]

D. None of the above

Test Questions

1. A test item will consist of a boxed, written communication followed by the question, "In which part of this communication, if any, is there an error in capitalization?"

2. The communication will contain either one error in capitalization (such as, the initial letter of a word) or no error in capitalization.

3. Each communication will exemplify the correct use of at least three of the following capitalization rules. Capitalization errors will consist of (a) failing to capitalize a word that should be capitalized or (b) capitalizing a word that should not be capitalized according to the following capitalization rules.

Capitalization Rules Eligible for Testing

o Initial capitals are required for:

   a. the first word of a sentence (for example, The king is dead.)

   b. names of days of the week (for example, Monday, Friday)

   c. names of months of the year (for example, May, November)

   d. the pronoun I (for example, George and I ate lunch.)

   e. names, including initials, of individuals (for example, John R. Doe)

   f. titles which precede individuals' names (for example, Mr. Jones, Mrs. Hill, Doctor Gomez, Senator Billings)

   g. all the words in the names of holidays, except prepositions and articles (for example, the Fourth of July)

   h. the first word and all nouns in the salutation of a letter (for example, Dear Sir or Madam)

   i. the first word in the complimentary close of a letter (for example, Sincerely yours or Yours truly)

   j. family relationship names, when they precede a name (for example, Uncle Bill) or are used in place of a person's name, especially in direct address (for example, "Did you find it, Mother?")

   k. all the words in the names of specific geographical locations, except prepositions, conjunctions, and articles (for example, Avenue of the Stars, Ozark Mountains, New York)

l. all the words in names of specific organizations and agencies, except prepositions, conjunctions, and articles (for example, Boy Scouts of America, National Organization of Women)

m. names of languages (for example, Spanish, French)

n. names of definite sections of a country or the world (for example, The South is a beautiful part of our country.)

o. names of nationalities (for example, Polish, Irish)

p. names of religions (for example, Episcopalian, Baptist) and deities (for example, Jehovah)

q. adjectives formed from names of geographical locations, languages, races, nationalities, and religions (for example, He was a famous Italian painter in the 17th century.)

r. the first word and all the other words in titles of books, articles, works of art, etc., except short prepositions, conjunctions, and articles (for example, <u>The Owl and the Pussycat</u>)

c <u>Initial capitals are never used for</u>:

a. common nouns (for example, My Car broke down yesterday.)

b. adjectives not based on proper nouns (for example, My Blue car needs to be washed.)

c. words other than the first word in the complimentary close of a letter (for example, Sincerely Yours, Yours Truly)

d. prepositions, conjunctions, or articles in the names of holidays, specific geographical locations, specific organizations, and titles of books, articles, etc. (for example, Fourth Of July)

e. family relationships when used alone or preceded by a possessive pronoun (for example, I was talking to my Father.)

f. compass directions that designate direction rather than a section of the country (for example, We live West of Maine.)

g. names of the seasons (for example, I loathe the Winter.)

h. names of school subjects, except for proper nouns or adjectives, or course titles followed by a number (for example, His grades in History and Biology were low.)

Answer Choices

1. The first three answer choices (A, B, and C) will be parts of the communication designated by bracketed numbers, for example, Part [4]; and the fourth answer choice (D) will be "None of the above."

2. Correct answer choices will be of three types: (Note that these items ask students to identify errors in capitalization.)

   -- Lack of Necessary Capitalization: That part of the communication in which capitalization, although necessary, is not present.

   -- Unnecessary Capitalization: That part of the communization in which capitalization, although not necessary, is present.

   -- The "None of the Above" response when there are no capitalization errors in the communication.

3. Incorrect answer choices will be of two types: (Note that these items ask students to identify errors in capitalization.)

   -- Proper Capitalization: That part of the communication which contains no error in capitalization.

   -- Unidentified Error: Selecting the "None of the above" response (indicating that no capitalization error is present) when, in fact, an error in capitalization exists within the communication.

Answer Analysis for Sample Item

1. Answer choice A is incorrect because the salutation is properly capitalized. The first word of the salutation and the following proper nouns require initial capital letters. Because the salutation is properly capitalized, and no unnecessary capitalization is present, Part [1] contains no capitalization error.

2. Answer choice B is correct. Any word naming a specific geographic location requires an initial capital letter. Although Nebraska is properly capitalized, the name of the city, Omaha, is not capitalized; therefore, Part [2] contains a capitalization error.

3. Answer choice C is incorrect because the sentence is properly capitalized. The first word of a sentence requires an initial capital letter. Because the first word of the sentence is capitalized, and no unnecessary capitalization is present, Part [5] contains no capitalization error.

4. Answer choice D is incorrect because the communication does, in fact, contain a capitalization error.

Instructional Emphases

The purpose of capitalization, that is, its clarifying function should be emphasized. Students may erroneously view capitalization as little more than a meaningless array of rules.

Generally speaking, capitalizing the initial letters of words serves a purpose of individualization. A "river" refers to a nonspecific, unidentifiable flow of water. The "Mississippi River," on the other hand, indicates a particular watercourse. An initial capital letter can signal a proper noun, the beginning of a new sentence, or a part of a title. As in other mechanical aspects of writing, students must acquire a knowledge of capitalization conventions in order to become proficient in this skill. After they write, they should check their work and "screen" it for possible capitalization errors, referring to their composition textbooks as necessary for clarification of rules.

When working with students on this objective, be sure to stress the capitalization rules that in your experience are most apt to be violated. Capitalization rules that are rarely violated need not be stressed as much.

It often surprises teachers who work with secondary school students to discover that there are some students who are unfamiliar with even the most rudimentary capitalization rules. If you find yourself working with any such students, it will doubtlessly be necessary to take them aside to engage in some serious "from the beginning" instruction regarding capitalization.

Possible Instructional Activities

Tiny Titles

Create a list (perhaps with the aid of an imaginative student or two) of imaginary titles, without capital letters. For example:

1. the bones and the rags
2. in search of reginald moore
3. for the children of the world

Have students rewrite the titles, capitalizing initial letters of words as necessary.

Daily Caps

Before class write on the board several sentences containing errors in capitalization. During roll call, have students identify the errors and rewrite the sentences correctly.

The Five Stars

Prepare a sheet with 25 sentences, 20 of which have errors in capitalization. Have students identify and correct errors. Ask students to place asterisks beside the sentences with no errors.

A Capital Offense

Provide copies of the capitalization rules listed above. Instruct students to write a sentence representing each rule, making a capitalization error in each sentence. (For example, to break the rule that says to capitalize the names of nationalities, a student could write: "Sullivan is an irish surname.") Have students then exchange papers and correct the capitalization errors.

Punctuation: Demonstrate knowledge of standard uses of punctuation.

This objective requires the student to identify whether there is a punctuation error within one of the specified parts of a brief communication.

Sample Item

> [1] There will be a special rehearsal for the marching band tomorrow afternoon. [2] All member's are expected to attend. [3] Anyone who is not present will be replaced in Saturday's parade. [4] Please be prompt! [5] We have a lot to do, and the rehearsal is scheduled for only one hour.

In which part of this communication, if any, is there an error in punctuation?

A. Part [2]

B. Part [3]

C. Part [5]

D. None of the above

Test Questions

1. A test item will consist of a boxed, written communication followed by the question, "In which part of this communication, if any, is there an error in punctuation?"

2. The communication will contain either one error in punctuation or no error in punctuation.

3. Each communication will exemplify various correct uses of the following punctuation rules. Punctuation errors will include omission of a necessary punctuation mark, insertion of an extraneous punctuation mark, or use of an incorrect punctuation mark.

Punctuation Rules Eligible for Testing

- Periods are required:
  - a. at the end of all declarative sentences, including indirect questions (for example, John asked where to look.)
  - b. after abbreviations (for example, oz., Mr., Feb.)
- Question Marks are required:
  - a. at the end of a direct question (for example, Where is she?)
- Exclamation Marks are required:
  - a. at the end of declarative or imperative sentences which express extremely strong feelings. (for example, You must hurry!)

- o Commas are required:

  a. in a series of three or more words or phrases. Students will not be tested on the use of the comma before "and" and "or" in a series. (for example, The teacher gave copies to Mary, Bill, and Jack.)

  b. between two independent clauses joined by a coordinating conjunction (for example, I cannot go, and Jim doesn't want to see the movie.)

  c. to separate coordinate adjectives that modify the same noun (for example, a powerful, reliable computer)

  d. to set off nonessential clauses and nonessential participial phrases (for example, Alonzo and Henry, who are best friends, have won academic scholarships.)

  e. to set off expressions, such as appositives, that interrupt the sentence (for example, Dorothy Perkins, the eldest woman in Lakeville, is 100 years old.)

  f. after the salutation in a friendly letter (for example, Dear Juan,)

  g. after the complimentary close in a letter (for example, Sincerely yours,)

  h. between the independent parts of a date, except when you are given only the month, in which case no punctuation is needed (for example, On January 20, 1942, a violent storm struck the coast.)

  i. between the independent parts of an address or geographical location (for example, I live at 42 Oak Street, Manoa, Ohio.)

  j. before a direct quotation (for example, She said, "I was born in Austin.")

- o Semicolons are required:

  a. between independent clauses not joined by coordinating conjuctions (for example, Sit-ups strengthen the stomach muscles; push-ups are good for the arms.)

- o Apostrophes are required:

  a. to form possessive nouns (for example, William's car, poverty's hardship, the Jones' house)

  b. to form contractions (for example, can't, shouldn't)

- Colons are required:

  a. to separate hours and minutes in time (for example, 3:15 p.m.)

  b. after the salutation in a business letter (for example, Dear Sir:)

- Hyphens are required:

  a. to divide a word at the end of a line (for example, When the students arrive in the auditorium, the assembly will begin.)

Answer Choices

1. The first three answer choices (A, B, and C) will be parts of the communication designated by bracketed numbers, for example, Part [1]; and the fourth answer choice (D) will be "None of the above."

2. Correct answer choices for test items measuring punctuation will be of two types: (Note that these items ask the student to identify errors in punctuation.)

   -- That part of the communication in which an omitted, extraneous, or incorrect punctuation mark is present.

   -- The "None of the above" response when there is no punctuation error in the communication.

3. Incorrect answer choices will be of two types: (Note that these items ask students to identify errors in punctuation.)

   -- Proper Punctuation: That part of the communication which contains no error in punctuation.

   -- Unidentified Error: Selecting the "None of the above" response (indicating that no punctuation error is present) when, in fact, there is a punctuation error in the communication.

Answer Analysis for Sample Item

1. Answer choice A is correct. The noun "members" is not a possessive noun and requires no apostrophe. The sentence gives information about what is expected of the band members but does not include anything that they possess. The apostrophe in this sentence is an error; therefore, Part [2] is the correct answer choice.

2. Answer choice B is incorrect because the sentence is properly punctuated. The apostrophe in "Saturday's" is needed because it is a possessive form modifying "parade." The sentence is a direct statement that is properly ended with a period; therefore, no punctuation error exists within Part [3] of the communication.

3. Answer choice C is incorrect because the sentence is properly punctuated. The comma before the coordinating conjunction "and" is necessary to separate the two independent clauses. Also, the sentence is properly ended with a period; therefore, no punctuation error exists within Part [5] of the communication.

4. Answer choice D is incorrect because the communication does, in fact, contain an error in punctuation.

Instructional Emphases

Punctuation marks in written English take the place of nonverbal clues to meaning in spoken English such as voice inflection, pauses, and gestures. They are used to make a written message as clear and as unambiguous as possible. Certain punctuation marks are necessary by convention: a period at the end of a declarative sentence, a colon to separate hours and minutes in time, an apostrophe to form a contraction or a possessive noun. Other marks are needed to clarify meaning. Without a comma the following sentence is ambiguous:

> My aunt visited us in March and in May and in June she visited my cousins.

After students have written a draft, they should read back through it to make sure that they have used (1) the correct punctuation marks called for by convention and (2) other punctuation marks as needed for clarity of meaning. It is particularly useful to identify punctuation needs that arise in the course of the writing process.

Be sure to stress the punctuation rules with which your students have particular difficulties. A brief diagnostic punctuation test is a useful tool to identify the types of punctuation rules that need attention.

Punctuation rules are often so subtle or, from the student's perspective, so unimportant that frequent review of those rules will prove helpful to students. Thus, a rule-by-rule review (or, for some students, introduction) will prove helpful in promoting student mastery of this TEAMS objective. The purpose of punctuation, that is, clarifying a writer's

intent, should be continually stressed (as opposed to one's adherence to seemingly arbitrary rules). Students must possess many prerequisite skills in order to master punctuation. Conscious modeling by the teacher, especially for comma use, is a useful teaching technique.

Possible Instructional Activities

Punctuation Problems

Prepare a worksheet with sentences containing errors in punctuation. These should include errors in the use of the following: periods, question marks, exclamation marks, commas, semicolons, colons, and hyphens. Have students identify the mistakes and correct the sentence.

Eight Groups

Students are divided into eight groups. Each group is responsible for creating sentences with errors in punctuation in each of the following categories: periods, question marks, exclamation marks, commas, semicolons, colons, and hyphens. Groups exchange papers, then identify and correct the mistakes.

Silly Sentences

Students enjoy humorous examples of how improper punctuation can prove disastrous to the intended meaning of a sentence. Provide a few examples, then have them create one or more of their own.

Spelling: Recognize the correct spellings of commonly used words.

This objective requires the student to identify whether there is a misspelled word within a set of three different words. The student must determine which word is misspelled if, in fact, a misspelling does exist within the test item.

Sample Item

Which, if any, of the following three words is misspelled?

A. intermission

B. silhouette

C. personaly

D. None of the above

Test Questions

1. A test item will consist of a question asking students, "Which, if any, of the following three words is misspelled?" The question will be followed by a set of three words from the Texas Education Agency Spelling List for grades 9-12.

2. Each test item measuring spelling will contain either one word that is misspelled or no misspelled words.

Answer Choices

1. The first three answer choices (A, B, and C) will be a set of three different words from the Texas Education Agency spelling list. The fourth answer choice (D) will be "None of the above."

2. The correct response will be either a correctly identified misspelled word or the "None of the above" response when none of the above words is misspelled.

3. Incorrect answer choices will be of two types: (Note that these items ask students to identify errors in spelling.)

   -- Proper Spelling: Identifying a word as misspelled when its spelling is correct.

-- Unidentified Error: Indicating that no spelling error is present when, in fact, one of the three words is misspelled.

Answer Analysis for Sample Item

1. Answer choice A is incorrect because the word, intermission, is properly spelled.

2. Answer choice B is incorrect because the word, silhouette, is properly spelled.

3. Answer choice C is correct. The word, personally, is not properly spelled, because the second "l" is missing from the word as spelled in the sample item.

4. Answer choice D is incorrect because the sample item does, in fact, contain an error in spelling.

Instructional Emphases

The English language has borrowed a vast number of terms from foreign sources. While this makes English a rich and varied tongue, it also makes spelling a problematic process for many people.

A student who has difficulties with spelling should become very familiar with the dictionary. For some spellers, even finding a word in the dictionary is a struggle; for these individuals, every search for a "lost word" will be a learning experience. The process should become easier with practice.

A knowledge of spelling rules, listed in composition textbooks, and a familiarity with affixes and their meanings can also improve a writer's spelling capabilities. Contact with modern foreign languages such as French and German or ancient languages such as Latin and classical Greek can help to crack our language's mysterious spelling code.

Encourage your students to keep track of words whose spellings they find difficult, perhaps in a special section of their notebook. An awareness of particular spelling problems will help those problems disappear. Because it is often difficult to stimulate students to keep track of their own spelling difficulties, you may need to check their notebooks periodically.

Yet, all these guidelines notwithstanding, on the TEAMS Exit Level Test your students will have to recognize, without

the aid of a dictionary, whether a number of words are misspelled. Thus, it will be helpful to them if you can promote their familiarity of the more difficult-to-spell words in the TEA Spelling List for grades 9-12. The familiarity can be promoted by any technique which, for you, has proven effective. Such time-honored approaches as daily spelling drills may prove highly useful in promoting learner mastery of this TEAMS objective.

Possible Instructional Activities

All Around the Room

Teacher uses the sentence strips (long strips of lined construction paper) to print the spelling words from the TEA Spelling List for grades 9-12. (A student with nice printing can help with this.) Each day a new strip is presented to the class before being stapled to the wall near the ceiling. Eventually the strips will circle around the room, and perhaps a second row will be necessary. Students will be kept aware of these words and their correct spellings. Encourage the use of these words in daily writing assignments. For poor readers and spellers it may be necessary to print only one or two words per strip.

Spot the Misspellings

Prepare a worksheet containing words from the TEA Spelling List for grades 9-12, half of which are incorrectly spelled. Ask students to circle those that are misspelled and to write them correctly.

Breaking the Rules

Refer students to the section in their composition textbook that lists spelling rules and their exceptions. Hand out lists of words that are spelled in such a way that they break spelling rules. Include in your list some spelling exceptions (for example, weight, mileage). For each word call on a student to tell you whether the word is an exception to a rule or a misspelling. Ask the student which rule is being broken and in what way that rule is violated. If the word is a misspelling, ask the student for the correct spelling of the word.

Spelling Bee

An occasional spelling bee can be stimulating and fun. A variation can be employed in which the teacher spells the word, and the students judge whether the word is spelled correctly or incorrectly. A student who makes a wrong identification of a word is out of the contest.

The class can also be divided into two teams (for example, the two sides of the classroom--students remain seated) with one student on each team designated to read the words (from a list or from cards taken from a hat or bowl) to the other team's members. Emphasize that team members cannot help another team member whose turn it is to spell a word. The teacher acts as an arbiter and records points on the board. The winning team is the team that either reaches a certain number of points first or that has the most points at a predesignated time.

Sound Spelling

Give students who misspell certain words because they mispronounce those words guided practice in pronouncing, hearing, and spelling words on the TEA Spelling List.

SKILL AREA: ENGLISH USAGE

English Usage: Demonstrate knowledge of correct English usage.

This objective requires students to identify whether there is an error in English usage within one of the specified parts of a communication.

Sample Item

> [1] Last week our class went to the city zoo. [2] We see many strange animals. [3] My favorite animals were the giraffes and the monkeys. [4] The entire day was a lot of fun.

In which part of this communication, if any, is there an error in English usage?

A. Part [1]

B. Part [2]

C. Part [3]

D. None of the above

Test Questions

1. A test item will consist of a boxed, written communication followed by the question, "In which part of this communication, if any, is there an error in English usage?"

2. The communication will contain either one error in English usage or no error in English usage.

3. English usage errors will represent violations of one of the following English-usage rules.

English-Usage Rules Eligible for Testing

- AGREEMENT

  a. Subject-Verb agreement: Subjects and predicates of clauses or sentences must agree in person and number. Subjects to be tested may include (1) simple subjects, (2) compound subjects joined by "and," (3) nouns separated from the predicate by an intervening phrase, and (4) indefinite pronouns.

  b. Pronoun-Antecedent agreement: Pronouns must agree with their antecedents in person and number.

- VERB USAGE

  a. Verb tense: Verb tense must be formed correctly. (Example of error: "He done it.")

- PRONOUN USAGE

  a. Nominative case: The nominative case of a pronoun must be used in all simple or compound subjects of sentences or clauses. (Example of error: "Can him and I pass out the books?")

  b. Objective case: The objective case of a pronoun must be used in all simple or compound objects of verbs or prepositions. (Example of error: "He returned the book to I.")

  c. Possessive case: The possessive case of pronouns must be formed correctly (for example, "her coat" rather than "her's coat").

- ADJECTIVE/ADVERB USAGE

  a. Negation: Only one negative word (including "scarcely" and "hardly") may be used to negate the same idea in a sentence. (Example of error: "He hardly never gets an A on book reports.")

  b. Adjective and adverb form: The comparative and superlative forms of all adjectives and adverbs must be formed correctly. (Example of error: "Greta is the better speaker in the class.")

  c. Adjective and adverb use: An adjective must be used to modify a noun or pronoun. An adverb must be used to modify verbs, adjectives, or other adverbs. (Example of error: "Many poor scores indicated that the class took the test too quick.")

o WORD CHOICE

a. Homonym selection: The proper homonym must be selected for a given context. (Example of error: "Their is no moon to be seen.")

b. Word appropriateness: The appropriate word must be selected for use in a sentence. (Example of error: "He should of come to the party.")

Answer Choices

1. The first three answer choices (A, B, and C) will be parts of the communication designated by bracketed numbers, for example, Part [1]; the fourth answer choice (D) will be "None of the above."

2. Correct answer choices will be of two types: (Note that these items ask students to identify errors in English usage.)

   -- Improper Usage: That part of the communication in which one of the five categories of English-usage rules has been violated.

   -- The "None of the above" response when there are no English-usage errors in the communication.

3. Incorrect answer choices for items measuring English usage will be of two types: (Note that these items ask students to identify errors in English usage.)

   -- Proper Usage: That part of the communication which contains no error in English usage.

   -- Unidentified Error: Selecting the "None of the above" response (indicating that no English-usage error is present) when, in fact, an error in English usage exists within the communication.

Answer Analysis for Sample Item

1. Answer choice A is incorrect because the sentence demonstrates proper English usage. All nouns as well as the pronoun and verbs are used correctly. There are no adjectives or adverbs and the sentence contains no word-choice errors; therefore, Part [1] contains no errors in English usage.

2. Answer choice B is correct. The verb "see" is in the present tense when it should be in the past tense (saw) because the communication is about a past event. The first sentence (Part [1]) contains the past-tense verb "went" and refers to "last week," thus establishing the tense of the communication; therefore, Part [2] contains an error in verb tense.

3. Answer choice C is incorrect because the sentence demonstrates proper English usage. The adjective "favorite" properly modifies "animals" and the pronoun "My" is also used properly. The verb "were" is (correctly) in the past tense and is used properly in conjunction with the nouns "giraffes" and "monkeys."

4. Answer choice D is incorrect because an error in English usage does, in fact, exist within the communication.

Instructional Emphases

While differences in dialect exist among speakers in various geographic, racial, and ethnic communities, the correct use of standard American English enhances clarity and effectiveness in written communications. For some speakers, written grammatical conventions are different from the speakers' internalized structures, and so these speakers must "switch codes" when writing. Choosing the correct word to write at a given place in a sentence often requires thought beyond that necessary for speaking.

For speakers of nonstandard dialects of American English, a "screen" must be developed, much like those which can be employed in capitalization, punctuation, and spelling. Rules may need to be memorized at first, then internalized with practice, practice, and more practice. The constant reading of works written in standard English will provide useful models of proper usage.

You may want to suggest to your students that a search for usage errors can come after their thoughts have been initially written. With a written draft before the student, the question should be posed, "This is the way I would say it, but is it the correct way to write it?"

You may also want to bring in the concepts of audience and purpose in relation to English usage. When students write letters to their friends, for example, they may prefer to write within their own dialect. Writing business letters or papers for school, however, requires correct standard usage--the use of a common code that can be widely understood.

Because of the set of English-usage rules on which this TEAMS objective has been based, it is apparent that you need to gauge your conversance with those rules. Although the list of English-usage rules is a relatively short one, the content embraced by those rules is substantial. Some of the rules are more readily addressed, for example, "pronoun-antecedent agreement." Others, such as "word appropriateness," are less easily addressed. Nonetheless, your students will doubtlessly be able to approach this TEAMS objective with more confidence if they know what English-usage rules are eligible for the test items.

Possible Instructional Activities

Verb Supply

Distribute a brief newspaper article or magazine story from which all verbs have been deleted and blanks put in their place. Students are to fill in the blanks with verbs of their choice that are correct in person and number. Have several students read their versions aloud, with the class correcting each student's verb usage as necessary.

As an alternative, the same activity may be employed with adjectives and adverbs.

Witch Won? (homonym selection)

For ninth- and tenth-graders or remedial students, distribute slips of paper on each of which is written--clearly and in large lower-case letters--one of a pair of homonyms. Thus, "brake," "break," "principle," and "principal" would be written on four separate slips of paper. Each student should have at least one word. Write a sentence, on the chalkboard, that contains a blank where a homonym should appear, for example:

"The _____ of our school is in her office."

The student possessing the slip of paper with "principal" written on it should walk to the board and place the paper in the blank. If the class agrees that it is the correct word, the student erases the board. Next, the student crosses out the word "principal" on a list of the homonyms provided by the teacher and then writes a sentence with a blank where another homonym from the list should go. (The teacher may need to assist the student in creating a clear and correct sentence.) The process may continue as long as students remain attentive and engaged in the activity.

You may want to have students copy the sentences as you go, then keep their lists for future reference.

Proper Gripes

Have each student think of a recent contact with a local businessperson that was in some way annoying or upsetting. (If students can't think of any, they can imagine such contacts.) Ask each student to write a rough draft of a complaint letter. Have volunteers read their letters and receive suggestions from classmates about making their letters more "proper." Discuss why students think the businessperson might pay more attention to the second version of the letter.

The Way I Say It

Have students write two column titles on their papers: "The Way I Say It" and "The Way I Write It." Ask them to think of things they say that they know are not considered standard American English and to write those (words, phrases, or sentences) in the first column. If they know a standard way to express the same idea, they should write this in the second column. You should provide an example or two of what the students should write.

Discuss the types of discrepancies that emerge, provide standard English alternatives (when alternatives have not been offered by students), and suggest further examples.

Peer Tutoring

Students are divided into five groups, then given a usage rule (from those eligible for the TEAMS objective). Direct each group to prepare a lesson and worksheet teaching that rule. Each group is required to make a board presentation, then distribute their worksheets.

Sample worksheet question: In which part of this sentence is there an error in English usage? "(1) The teacher/ (2) gave pencils to/ (3) Julie and I."

Correct Answer: Part 3 - pronoun-usage error

Worksheets may be corrected by the presenting group.

25 Mistakes

Prepare a sheet with 25 sentences, each of which has one error. Errors should be in these categories (five sentences per category): noun usage, verb usage, pronoun usage, adjective/adverb usage, homonym choice. (See list of English-usage rules.) Students find and correct the mistake in each sentence.

Tense Tension

Hand out a teacher-prepared paragraph with inconsistent verb tenses. Have students identify incorrect verbs and correct them so that the tense is consistent throughout the paragraph.

SKILL AREA: SENTENCE FORMATION

The skill area of sentence formation includes two objectives, namely, sentence completion and sentence combination. The objective dealing with sentence completion focuses on the student's ability to distinguish properly formed sentences from sentence fragments and run-on sentences. The objective dealing with sentence combination focuses on the student's ability to select proper coordination and subordination of clauses in simple sentences.

Sentence Completion: Demonstrate the ability to distinguish complete sentences from fragments and/or run-ons.

This objective requires students to identify whether there is a sentence-formation error within one of the specified parts of a brief communication.

Sample Item

[1] Dear Biff,

[2] My parents bought me a new glove for my birthday. [3] It is a Pete Rose model I can't wait to try it out against the Tigers tomorrow. [4] How is your team doing this season? [5] Ask your parents if you can come and stay at my house for a week.

[6] Yours truly,

[7] Theo

In which part of this communication, if any, is there an error in sentence formation?

A. Part [2]

B. Part [3]

C. Part [4]

D. None of the above

Test Questions

1. A test item will consist of a boxed, written communication followed by the question, "In which part of this communication, if any, is there an error in sentence formation?"

2. The communication will contain one run-on sentence, one sentence fragment, or no sentence-formation errors.

Answer Choices

1. The first three answer choices (A, B, and C) will be parts of the communication designated by bracketed numbers, for example, Part [3]; and the fourth answer choice (D) will be "None of the above."

2. Correct answer choices for test items measuring sentence formation will be of two types: (Note that students are being asked to identify errors in sentence formation.)

   -- Improper Formation: That part of the communication which contains a run-on sentence or sentence fragment.

   -- The "None of the above" response when there is no sentence-formation error within the communication.

3. Incorrect answer choices for test items measuring sentence formation will be of two types: (Note that students are being asked to identify errors in sentence formation.)

   -- Proper Formation: That part of the communication which contains no error in sentence formation.

   -- Unidentified Error: Selecting the "None of the above" response (indicating no sentence-formation error is present) when, in fact, a run-on sentence or fragment exists within the communication.

Answer Analysis for Sample Item

1. Answer choice A is incorrect because the sentence exhibits proper sentence formation. Part [2] is a simple declarative sentence containing a subject and a predicate that expresses a complete thought; thus, Part [2] contains no error in sentence formation.

2. Answer choice B is correct. The sentence exhibits improper sentence formation because Part [3] is a run-on sentence that includes two independent clauses with neither a coordinating conjunction nor proper punctuation to transform the run-on sentence into two appropriate clauses.

3. Answer choice C is incorrect because the sentence exhibits proper formation. Part [4] is a direct question that contains a subject, a predicate, and expresses a complete thought. The direct question is properly terminated with a question mark; therefore, Part [4] contains no error in sentence formation.

4. Answer choice D is incorrect because an error in sentence formation does, in fact, exist within the communication.

Instructional Emphases

Certain fundamental constructs should be reinforced when providing students with review instruction on the formation of complete sentences.

Review with your students the concept that every sentence must contain at least one subject and one predicate (verb phrase). This will help preclude the writing of sentence fragments such as:

Reading, my favorite pastime. (no verb)
Ran as fast as he could. (no subject)

You will then need to explain that a complete sentence becomes a fragment if a word such as "although" or "because" is inserted before it.

Ellie Nations is our class president.
(is a complete sentence, but)
Because Ellie Nations is our class president.
(is a fragment.)

Subordinating conjunctions such as "because," "although," and "unless" suggest an uncompleted thought that needs to be completed within the sentence in which it appears.

Because Ellie Nations is our class president,
she represents us at student-body meetings.

Indicate to your students that the same holds true for the coordinating conjunctions such as "and," "but," and "or." (It might be noted that "and" or "but" can, in some instances, start a sentence.)

Mary went to the theater.
(is a complete sentence, but)
Or Mary went to the theater.
(is a fragment.)

John went to his friend's house and
Mary went to the theater.
(is a complete sentence.)

If the above sentence lost its conjunction, it would become a run-on. Even with a comma added, this is not a sentence.

John went to his friend's house,
Mary went to the theater.
(is a run-on and is sometimes referred to as a comma splice.)

Review with your students that (1) a complete sentence needs a subject and a verb phrase, and (2) a conjunction is needed to combine two complete sentences into one. Breaking the first rule creates a fragment; breaking the second rule creates a run-on.

Possible Instructional Activities

Fixing Fragments

Provide a list of sentence fragments. Have students independently create complete sentences from the fragments. Then, one at a time, write each fragment on the board. Ask why each is not a complete sentence and have students tell you possible ways of completing the sentence.

Friendly Reunions

Provide a list that is divided into two columns: (1) sentence fragments lacking a predicate; and (2) sentence fragments lacking a subject. Each fragment in the first column should logically and grammatically connect with a fragment in the second column. For example:

(1)	(2)
Jim, my best friend.	Belongs to Mr. Perez.
The big, black dog.	Like to eat ice cream.
A lot of people.	Is tall and has brown hair.

Have students match each fragment in Column 1 with a fragment in Column 2.

Problems with Sentences

Prepare and distribute a worksheet with 30 sentences: 10 run-on sentences, 10 fragments, and 10 sentences with no formation errors. Instruct students to identify which are fragments, which are run-ons, and which are correct. Discuss reasons for their choices.

Rambling Run-Ons

Provide a list of run-ons. Direct students to create two sentences out of each run-outs.

Sentence Combination: Recognize the sentence that best combines two related sentences.

This objective requires students to select from four choices a sentence that best combines two related sentences.

Sample Item

> Enos gave Bertha a dozen roses before their date. He wanted to make a good impression.

Which of the following sentences best combines the information given in the two sentences above?

A. Enos gave Bertha a dozen roses because he wanted to make a good impression.

B. Enos gave Bertha a dozen roses before their date, but he wanted to make a good impression.

C. Enos gave Bertha a dozen roses before their date because he wanted to make a good impression.

D. Enos gave Bertha a dozen roses before their date although he wanted to make a good impression.

Test Questions

1. A test item will consist of two sentences in a box followed by the question, "Which of the following sentences best combines the information given in the two sentences above?"

2. The two sentences presented will contain related information. The relationship will be sufficiently clear so that it will be possible for students to determine whether (a) the two sentences are coordinate (that is, of equal rank) in their importance of (b) one of the two sentences is subordinate (that is, below the other in rank or importance) to the other.

3. The nature of this coordinate or subordinate relationship between the two boxed sentences will be sufficiently clear so that an appropriate conjunction (for example, and, but, for, because, thus, although, etc.) can be selected to combine the two sentences.

Answer Choices

1. Each answer choice will be a combination of the two sentences presented in the box. Each combination will be composed of two clauses that will contain most of the information included within the two boxed sentences.

2. The correct answer choice will be the sentence which best combines the two boxed sentences so that their coordinate (equality of rank or importance) or subordinate (one sentence's greater or lesser importance than the other) status is represented. Equally important, the nature of the coordinate or subordinate relationship will be accurately reflected in the conjunction selected.

3. Incorrect answer choices for test items requiring students to select the best sentence which combines the information from two related sentences will be of four types:

   -- Inappropriate Subordination: Information from one of the two sentences is given less importance when the sentences' content implies that the information be given equal importance.

   -- Inappropriate Coordination: Information from the two sentences is given equal importance when the content implies that information from one sentence be given greater or lesser importance than the other.

   -- Improper Conjunction: The selected conjunction is inconsistent with the implied content relationship between the two sentences.

   -- Omitted Information: Essential information from the two boxed sentences is missing.

Answer Analysis for Sample Item

1. Answer choice A is incorrect because the sentence-combining information from the two boxed sentences leaves out essential information from the first sentence.

2. Answer choice B is incorrect because a coordinating conjunction is used, giving information within the second sentence equal importance to the information in the first sentence.

3. Answer choice C is correct. The proper subordinating conjunction is used to establish a logical relationship between the ideas expressed in the two boxed sentences. Also, all of the essential information is included.

4. Answer choice D is incorrect because the improper subordinating conjuction is inconsistent with the implied content relationship between the two sentences, despite the presence of all the essential information from the two boxed sentences.

Instructional Emphases

This TEAMS objective revolves around two key points regarding the relationship between two sentences that one wishes to combine. First, there is the equality relationship, that is, the subordinate nature of that relationship. Are the sentences equal in import (and thus coordinate) or is one sentence of lesser import than the other (and thus subordinate)? The second point is the specific nature of the relationship between the two sentences. Is action in one sentence the cause of the action in the other sentence (possible conjunction: "because")? Are the two sentences simply two events that occur at the same time (possible conjunction: "and")? Did one sentence clearly take place following the other (possible conjunction: "after")?

Stress these two considerations, that is, the equality relationship and the nature of the relationship. Also note that in the combining of sentences, it is imperative not to omit any important information. In some of the TEAMS test items there will be such omissions; hence, students must be aware that omitting key information renders a sentence combination unsuitable.

Conjunctions are used to combine sentences. They establish relationships between the ideas expressed in the sentences they combine. Two sentences that are joined then become clauses; the new sentence that they create is called a complex sentence or a compound sentence.

There are two types of conjunctions: coordinating conjunctions and subordinating conjunctions. Coordination is the joining together of two clauses that are of equal grammatical importance. There are six coordinating conjunctions: and, but, or, nor, for, and yet. A clause that is subordinated--

introduced by a subordinating conjunction--becomes a clause that somehow modifies or elaborates upon the idea expressed in the main clause. Some subordinators--such as because, although, if, and since--introduce a condition or a reason. Others--such as when, before, after, and until--establish a temporal relationship.

As they stand, the following two sentences have no known relationship:

Jane is watering her garden.
The sun is shining.

We can join them with a coordinating conjunction, which makes them equal parts of a longer sentence:

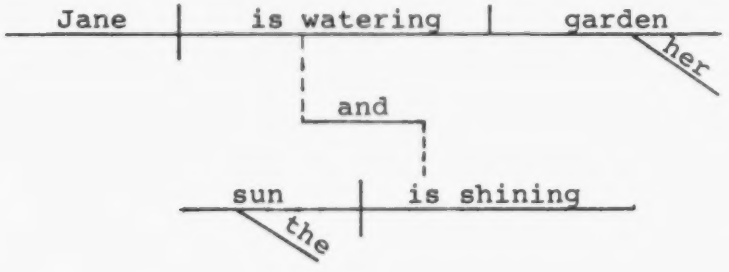
Jane is watering her garden, and the sun is shining.

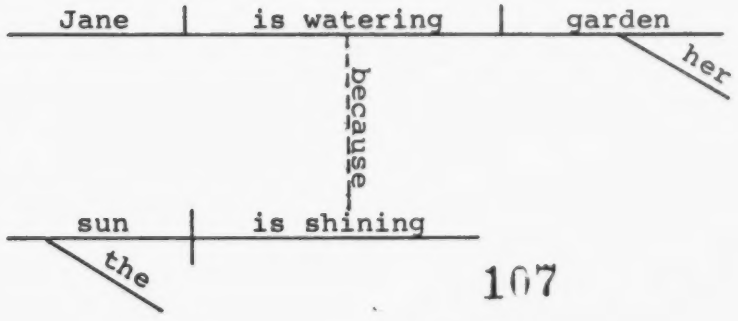
We can also subordinate one of the clauses:

Jane is watering her garden because the sun is shining.

Whenever the sun is shining, Jane is watering her garden.

You may want to employ sentence diagramming with your students as a reinforcement of the difference between coordination and subordination in complex sentences.





Possible Instructional Activities

Joining Sentences

Provide students with a list of coordinating conjunctions and a list of subordinating conjunctions. Provide pairs of sentences--either orally, on the board, or on duplicated sheets--that students are to join with an appropriate conjunction. For example:

> Frank bought a new jacket.
> He lost his old jacket.

First have students work independently. Each pair of sentences is to be combined in a complex sentence, using a conjunction from one of the lists. Then discuss possible correct solutions, calling on students to read their sentences aloud. Discuss why each sentence requires a subordinating or a coordinating conjunction. There may be several correct responses for each pair of sentences.

In the above pair of sentences, for example, a subordinating conjunction is required because there is a cause/effect relationship between the ideas of losing an old jacket and buying a new one.

> Frank bought a new jacket
> <u>because</u> he lost his old one.

Uncoordination and Insubordination

Provide sentence fragments that begin with conjunctions (perhaps separating those with coordinating conjunctions from those with subordinating conjunctions, to reinforce the distinction). Have each student complete them in a logical way.

Using Conjunctions

Using lists of conjunctions, students are to write sentences using these conjunctions. Collect the papers and select sentences to compile a worksheet. The worksheet should include both correct and incorrect usage of conjunctions. The students receive copies of the sheet and determine whether each sentence makes proper use of a conjunction. For example:

> Mary ate the ice cream because she was hungry. (correct)
> Mary ate the ice cream but she enjoyed it. (incorrect)

Rewrite a Children's Story

Students are divided into groups of three or four. Each group is given a first- or second-grade basal reader. (If such texts are unavailable, you can provide students with copies of stories from a lower elementary basal. A different story is to be provided for each group.) Each student first works alone to rewrite the group's story, combining short sentences by using conjunctions. The students meet in their groups and discuss each paragraph of the story and how the sentences are best combined. Students then collaborate to rewrite the story and present it to the rest of the class.

SKILL AREA: PROOFREADING

Proofreading: Demonstrate the ability to proofread a written communication.

This objective requires the student to identify whether there is an error in capitalization, punctuation, spelling, or English usage within specified parts of a communication.

Sample Item

> [1] Dinosaurs are typically thought of as huge, terrifying lizards. [2] However, not all dinosaurs were gigantic reptiles. [3] Some were as small as chickens? [4] Although they can be classified as reptiles, dinosaurs were a distinct group of animals. [5] They had certain characteristics that no other kind of animal possessed.

In which part of this communication, if any, is there an error in capitalization, punctuation, spelling, or English usage?

A. Part [2]

B. Part [3]

C. Part [4]

D. None of the above

Test Questions

1. A test item will consist of a boxed, written communication followed by the question, "In which part of the communication, if any, is there an error in capitalization, punctuation, spelling, or English usage?"

2. The communication will contain either (a) one error in mechanics (that is, capitalization, punctuation, or spelling) or English usage or (b) no errors at all.

3. For test items in which students must identify an error in capitalization, the communication will contain either a word without an initial capital letter that should be capitalized or a word with an initial capital letter that should not be capitalized according to the capitalization rules used in connection with the TEAMS capitalization objective (see pp. 74-75).

4. For test items in which students must identify an error in punctuation, the communication will contain either an omitted punctuation mark that is necessary, an inserted punctuation that is unnecessary, or the use of an incorrect punctuation mark. All punctuation errors as well as proper punctuation will be drawn from the punctuation rules used in connection with the TEAMS punctuation objective (see pp. 79-81).

5. For test items in which students must identify an error in spelling, only words from the Texas Education Agency (TEA) Spelling List for grades 9-12 will be misspelled. Such misspellings will represent typical ways in which words are incorrectly spelled.

6. For test items in which students must identify an error in English usage, errors will consist of violations of the English-usage rules used in connection with the TEAMS English-usage objective (see pp. 89-90).

Answer Choices

1. The first three answer choices (A, B, and C) will be parts of the communication designated by bracketed numbers, for example, [4]; the fourth answer choice (D) will be "None of the above."

2. Correct answer choices for test items measuring proofreading will be of six types: (Note that these items ask students to identify errors.)

   -- Omitted Capitalization: That part of the communication in which a required initial capital letter is not present.

   -- Unnecessary Capitalization: That part of the communication in which an unnecessary initial capital letter is present.

   -- Improper Punctuation: That part of the communication in which an omitted, extraneous, or incorrect punctuation mark is present.

-- Improper Spelling: That part of the communication in which a spelling error is present.

-- Improper English Usage: That part of the communication in which there is a violation of one of the eligible English-usage rules listed above.

-- The "None of the above" response when there is no error in capitalization, punctuation, spelling, or English usage.

3. Incorrect answer choices for test items measuring proofreading will be of two types: (Note that these items ask students to identify errors.)

   -- Proper Usage: Selecting that part of the communication in which there is no error in capitalization, punctuation, spelling, or English usage.

   -- Unidentified Error: Selecting the "None of the above" response (indicating that no error is present within the communication) when, in fact, an error in either capitalization, punctuation, spelling, or English usage exists within the communication.

Answer Analysis for Sample Item

1. Answer choice A is incorrect because Part [2] contains no errors in capitalization, punctuation, spelling, or English usage. The first word, "However," is properly capitalized, the sentence is properly punctuated, and there are no misspellings. The verb, "were," is in the proper tense, and there are no violations of eligible English-usage rules.

2. Answer choice B is correct. Based on the preceding sentences, the information in Part [3] is not meant to be phrased as a question. The sentence explains the information given in the preceding sentences; therefore, the question mark at the end of this sentence is an error.

3. Answer choice C is incorrect because Part [4] contains no errors in capitalization, punctuation, spelling or English usage. The first word, "Although," is properly capitalized, the sentence is properly punctuated, and there are no misspellings. Also, there are no violations of eligible English-usage rules.

4. Answer choice D is incorrect because there is, in fact, a punctuation error within the communication.

Instructional Emphases

Rather than as a discrete activity, proofreading should be viewed by students as an integral part of the total writing process. Proofreading is part of the revision phase of the writing process; hence, it should occur after students have put their thoughts on paper. Many students who are faced with a writing assignment are almost paralyzed by a fear of making errors. Whenever possible, provide opportunities for revision and resubmission of students' written work. In this way students can (1) learn from their writing mistakes and (2) acquire a positive attitude regarding the written expression of their thoughts. Communicate to your students that, as they become more practiced as readers and as writers, they will acquire increased competence in the mechanics of correct writing. While this competence is being developed, students should be encouraged to refer to dictionaries and composition handbooks for proper spellings and rules of mechanics.

Proofreading involves using various "screens": capitalization, punctuation, spelling, and English usage. A "screen," or filter, consists of a body of knowledge in a mechanics or usage skill area, and its use promotes a sensitivity to possible problems. While some students may find it easy to employ all screens at once, others may find it valuable to filter their written work through one screen at a time to discover possible errors. Many pieces of writing produced by students in other writing skills activities can be used for practice in proofreading.

Possible Instructional Activities

Dictation

Write a paragraph or select one from a magazine or newspaper article. The paragraph should contain capital letters, several ways of using punctuation marks, and some words with problematic spellings. Read the paragraph orally to your students three times: the first time, students should listen without writing; the second time, they should write what you are reading; the third time, they should look over their work for mechanical errors.

Correcting students' written work may be handled in a number of ways: (1) Hand out a copy of the article and have students correct their own work; (2) Ask students to exchange papers and proofread each other's work, then provide correct answers (for example, on copies, blackboard, or overhead projector); (3) Collect papers and either correct them your-

self or have them corrected by a responsible student or aide; or (4) Call on students to write sentences on the board and, when the whole paragraph is on the board, call on other students to read sentences aloud and identify errors.

Letters to Congress

Following a discussion on issues concerning students, tell them that you would like each of them to write a letter to a member of Congress on one of these issues. Provide names and addresses, along with guidelines as to which persons may be appropriate recipients of correspondence regarding specific issues.

After students have written and have proofread their own letters, ask them to exchange letters with other students for a second proofreading and, perhaps, a third (until no further errors are discovered). You, the teacher, should be the final proofreader of the letter. Provide stationery and envelopes for final copies of letters, then send them. Have students bring to class any responses they later receive.

This activity may also be used with letters of praise or complaint to businesses, to organizations representing various causes, to famous people, or to individuals in local government.

Editors

Provide students with copies of excerpts from a newspaper or magazine article that you have altered to contain errors in capitalization, punctuation, spelling, and English usage. Have students proofread the article independently. Discuss errors they found or failed to detect.

How Many Errors?

Provide a series of duplicated paragraphs, each paragraph containing zero to five errors in capitalization, punctuation, spelling, and/or English usage. Have students mark the errors they discover in each paragraph, count how many errors they found, then write that number next to the paragraph. When students have completed their independent work, ask them how many of them discovered five errors, how many found four, and so on to zero. Beginning with a student who found the lowest number of errors, ask that student to tell the class which errors, if any, were found. Ask students for more identified errors until all errors have been discovered and discussed, (and, therefore, the correct number of errors has been determined).

Prompting to Proofing

Provide a series of writing prompts, for example:

1. Describe your best friend.

2. Describe a place where you would like to live.

3. Write a summary of your favorite book.

4. Describe how you feel about animals.

5. Pretend you're a reporter and make up a news story.

Ask students to select a prompt and write for 10 minutes about it, without stopping to think or to reread what they have written. Collect their papers (after they have labeled them with names).

The next day, or even a few days later, return the papers and ask students to spend a half hour or so rewriting their work in an organized, cohesive composition. Have them write their names lightly, in pencil. Collect these papers, as well.

On another day return the papers one more time for proofreading. Have students erase their names before you collect the papers. Then, redistribute the papers at random to be proofread by other students.

It may prove beneficial at this time to discuss errors found and to reinforce the rules that have been broken.

Students can retrieve their own papers from a pile gathered at the front of the class or circulated among the students. Final rewrites can then be produced at home or during class time.

SKILL AREA: ORGANIZATION

Organization: Demonstrate the ability to organize a written communication.

This objective requires the student to select, from four choices, the sentence that best completes a communication presented to students. The sentence selected will be essential to either the beginning, continuing, or ending portion of the communication.

Sample Item

(A student wrote this paragraph in a teacher-assigned paper about Socrates.)

Socrates was a prominent philosopher and an outstanding teacher. The "Socratic Method," that is, the approach used by Socrates, was far from a traditional lecture. _____ _____. Indeed, his approach to teaching was laden with questions. Much of today's "indirect teaching" can be traced directly to the instructional scheme used by Socrates. Socrates' philosophic contributions may actually have been overshadowed by his instructional contributions.

Which of the following sentences can best be used to continue the communication?

A. Socrates was the teacher of Plato who, in turn, was the teacher of Aristotle.

B. Socrates was a great teacher as well as a fine philosopher.

C. In conclusion, Socrates was one of history's finest instructors.

D. In contrast to lecturing, Socrates attempted to draw from the student that knowledge which the student already possessed.

Test Questions

1. A test item will consist of a boxed, written communication, one or two paragraphs in length, from which a single sentence has been deleted. This deletion will be presented by two partially or totally blank lines. The communication will be followed by a question pertaining to the location of the deleted sentence. This question will be, "Which of the following sentences can best be used to (begin, continue, or end) the communication?"

2. The blank lines representing the deleted sentence will be located either at the beginning, somewhere within, or at the end of the communication.

3. Each communication will be preceded by a brief, parenthesized sentence describing the purpose, topic, audience, and form of the communication.

4. The topic of each communication will be developed in one of two modes:

   a. A topic may be developed through a narrative mode, in which the communication will be a narration of a sequence of events. This development will involve the writer's relating events in a clear chronological order, from those most distant in time to those most recent, or vice versa.

   b. A topic may be developed through a descriptive mode, in which the communication will be a presentation of an idea supported and explained by details and comments. This development will involve the writer's presenting a series of details or explanatory statements expanding the topic established by the focusing sentence.

5. The first sentence of the communication, whether or not it is the deleted correct answer, will be the focusing sentence. Such sentences will identify the topic and establish the means by which the writer will develop that topic.

6. The last sentence of the communication, whether or not it is the deleted correct answer, will be the concluding sentence. Such sentences will complete or summarize the communication in a succinct manner.

Answer Choices

1. Correct answer choices for test items measuring organization will be of three types:

   -- Focusing Sentence: A sentence which identifies a topic and establishes a direction for that topic's development. Such a sentence will be the proper response to the question asking students to select the best sentence to begin the communication.

   -- Continuing Sentence: A sentence which logically continues the communication with regard to the direction of development established by the focusing sentence as well as sentences preceding or following the deleted sentence. Such a sentence will be the proper response to the question asking students to select the best sentence to continue the communication.

   -- Concluding Sentence: A sentence which completes or summarizes a communication. Such a sentence will be the proper response to the question asking students to select the best sentence to end the communication.

2. Incorrect answer choices for test items measuring organization will be of four types. The first three types are standard for all items, whether the deleted sentence is located at the beginning, somewhere within, or at the end of the communication. The fourth type will be contingent upon the location of the deleted sentence within each item. The four types of incorrect answer choices are:

   -- Out-of-Sequence Sentence: A sentence which belongs in the communication but does not fit into the organization pattern at the location of the deleted sentence.

   -- Irrelevant Sentence: A sentence that is unrelated to the content of the communication.

   -- Redundant Sentence: A sentence that rephrases another sentence within the communication.

   -- The fourth type of incorrect answer is, as stated above, contingent upon the location of the deleted sentence. Thus, focusing sentences, continuing sentences, and concluding sentences may all be incorrect answer choices depending on the following three situations:

-- For items asking students to select a sentence to begin a communication, a continuing sentence or a concluding sentence may be used as an incorrect answer choice.

-- For items asking students to select a sentence to continue a communication, a focusing sentence or a concluding sentence may be used as an incorrect answer choice.

-- For items asking students to select a sentence to end a communication, a focusing sentence or a continuing sentence may be used as an incorrect answer choice.

Answer Analysis for Sample Item

1. Answer choice A is incorrect because the sentence is irrelevant to the topic of the communication. None of the sentences within the communication make a reference to Plato or Aristotle and their relationships to Socrates; therefore, the information in this sentence is irrelevant from an organizational standpoint and, thus, is incorrect.

2. Answer choice B is incorrect because the sentence merely rephrases the information within the focusing sentence of the communication. The sentence is redundant; therefore, the information adds nothing to the communication from an organizational standpoint and, thus, is incorrect.

3. Answer choice C is incorrect because the sentence is a concluding sentence. Because this item has a deleted sentence within the paragraph, students are being asked to select a sentence which continues the communication. From an organizational standpoint, a concluding sentence cannot continue the information within the communication and, thus, is incorrect.

4. Answer choice D is correct. The sentence introduces new information which logically bridges the sentence preceding and the sentence following the deleted sentence. The sentence continues the information and is relevant to the topic of the communication; therefore, the response is correct.

Instructional Emphases

A properly organized paragraph allows its reader to move along smoothly from one idea to another from beginning to end. This continuity adds to the clarity and effectiveness of any writing; hence, this should be a primary goal of every writer.

A paragraph, as the composition of which it forms a part, should begin with an introduction, progress through an elaboration of ideas, and end with a conclusion. The introduction serves as a focus on what is to follow; it sets the stage for the rest of the paragraph. Internal, or continuing, sentences form the body of the paragraph, expounding upon the idea expressed in the introduction by way of examples and further comment. The concluding sentence completes or summarizes the paragraph in a clear and concise manner.

If the paragraph narrates a sequence of events, the introduction will establish a general context for the enumerated events to follow; the continuing sentences will consist primarily of a chronologically ordered sequence of events; and the conclusion will be some kind of comment concerning the events overall.

In a paragraph that explains, describes, or persuades, the introductory sentence poses a topic or opinion that is supported by evidence and commented or expanded upon in the body of the paragraph. A concluding, or "clincher," sentence should reemphasize in a succinct and powerful way points previously made.

Be sure to familiarize your students with the three types of sentences, that is, focusing, continuing, and concluding, which form the central nature of this TEAMS objective. Students should become sufficiently facile in recognizing or writing each of these three types of sentences so that the test items associated with this objective pose no difficulties.

With relative ease, some of the following instructional activities could be related to the TEAMS reading objectives regarding main idea and detail.

Possible Instructional Activities

Jumbled Paragraphs

Provide students with copies of a paragraph in which the order of the sentences has been mixed. Ask students to rewrite the paragraph so that it is organized properly and contains a topic sentence, logical transitions, and a concluding sentence. The paragraph may require an organizational pattern which is sequential or expository.

Class Paragraphs

Ask each student to write a topic sentence at the top of a piece of paper. Tell students that these sentences will

be used to create five-sentence paragraphs. Have students who are unable to think of topics raise their hands. Give these students scraps of paper on which are written titles such as "The Pains and Pleasures of Adolescence" or "A Day in the Life of a High School Student." These students are to write their topic sentences based on the titles they receive.

When every student has written a topic sentence, have students pass their papers to other students. These students will each write a second sentence which logically follows the topic sentence. Continue the process until each paragraph has five sentences, reminding students to write concluding sentences for the last step.

Finally, have a sixth student write a title for each paragraph to see whether the paragraph has formed an identifiable, cohesive whole. A few paragraphs may be read aloud by students and discussed (Is the paragraph organized? Why or why not? Are the sentences logically sequenced? etc.) Others can be reproduced and distributed the next day for discussion and revision.

Headlines

Ask students to bring in headlines clipped from newspaper articles they have read. Have the students exchange headlines with other students. Then have students write paragraphs summarizing the articles that might have followed the headlines (one paragraph per student). Have each student write five or six sentences that form a logically sequenced paragraph. Have several paragraphs read aloud and discussed. The student who provided a headline should be prepared to compare the paragraph written on that headline with the corresponding article. (You may want to have the articles brought in, as well.) Discuss whether the paragraph is well-organized and in what manner (for example, chronologically).

Saturday Stories

Ask that students write a brief list of phrases describing things they did on a recent Saturday and write a name at the top of the page. (Students may use their own names or, if they prefer, imaginary names.) Collect the papers, and redistribute them at random.

Each student is to write a paragraph about how the person named at the top of the paper spent a day. The list of

activities will be the bases for the internal sentences in the paragraph. The writer will form introductory and concluding sentences based on the body of the paragraph.

That's My Opinion

Hand out slips of paper containing written statements such as, "Texas is the best place in the world to live." Have each student write an organized paragraph expressing or refuting that statement.

After students write paragraphs expressing their own positions, you may also want to have them express the opposite point of view.

Getting Organized

Students are divided into three groups. Each group selects a paragraph from a newspaper, magazine, or text. The students in Group I rewrite their paragraph but place the FIRST sentence in a different location; the students in Group II rewrite their paragraph but place a MIDDLE sentence in a different location; and the students in Group III rewrite their paragraph, placing the LAST sentence in a different location. Collect the papers and draw from them examples of paragraphs that need to be reorganized. You may also use some of the paragraphs by omitting the re-located sentence and creating a multiple-choice question, using the correct sentence as one of the choices in filling in the blank space, for example:

_____.

They ease the bright intensity of youth and the aching loneliness of old age. They tease us out from our sadness, making us smile despite ourselves. They cushion us from the frustrations of life, making our days and our nights softer and warmer. Life would be less bearable without them.

Answer choices:

(a) There are many different kinds of pets, including dogs and cats.

(b) Pets play important roles in many of our lives.

(c) When I was a child, I had a dog named Shawni.

(d) They make us feel loved and needed.

Discuss both why (b) is the correct answer and why the remaining answer choices do not appropriately begin the paragraph.